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Perceptions of gender and gender equality in Ugandan NGO, ACFODE, during years 2013-
2014 and 2016-2017

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This thesis examines the perceptions of gender and gender equality in Ugandan gender advocacy non-governmental organization, ACFODE during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017. The research questions concern the perceptions of 1. gender, 2. gender equality and 3. improving gender equality in ACFODE's Arise-magazine during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017.

The theoretical framework of the thesis includes prior theories and research about gender, equality and gender equality. In the theoretical framework it is suggested that 'gender' is a social construction that is built on 'sex' and can differ from it. Construction of gender includes several factors and for example time and place have impact on how gender is constructed. Equality has also varying definitions that differ depending on time and place. ACFODE has worked over thirty years in the field of gender issues in Uganda - hence, it is interesting to examine how gender and gender equality are perceived in ACFODE's texts.

The research method utilized in the research is qualitative, data-based content analysis. The data is collected from ACFODE's Arise-magazine, and totally four issues are included in the analysis of the research. In the results of the research it is found that there are mainly two genders perceived in ACFODE's texts – men and women. Men and women are largely seen through confrontation in the data. Gender inequalities are perceived to exist in Uganda despite the numerous efforts to narrow the gender gap for example in education and political field. Especially women are perceived to face gender inequalities, which is in line with the prior research. In Ugandan culture, men are often perceived as dominant decision-makers, whereas women are perceived to be weaker and dependent on men. The texts in Arise acknowledge that women are capable of independent income-gaining and decision-making, and aim at increasing knowledge about women's capabilities as well as change women's role to more independent.

Enhancing gender equality in Uganda is perceived to be successful especially if women's rights and position are improved in terms of hearing women's voice, empowering women and giving women access to decision-making. In addition, the importance of men's engagement in promoting women's rights emerges from the data, since men are perceived to have more power in Ugandan culture than women. The challenges connected to improving gender equality include the gap between what is provided by legislation and what happens in real life, deeply rooted cultural and religious beliefs concerning women's and men's differences and separate roles as well as the sometimes threatening approach of women's movement which may make people defensive. It is perceived to be important to include both women and men in decision-making and narrow the gap between men and women.

Keywords: Uganda, gender, equality, gender equality, non-governmental organizations, women's rights, development

Oulun yliopisto

Kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta

Käsitykset sukupuolesta ja sukupuolten tasa-arvosta ugandalaisessa kansalaisjärjestössä, ACFODE:ssa, vuosina 2013-2014 ja 2016-2017 (Miia Oravainen)

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Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa tutkin, millaisia sukupuoleen ja sukupuolten tasa-arvoon liittyviä käsityksiä ilmenee ugandalaisen kansalaisjärjestön, ACFODE:n julkaisussa vuosina 2013-2014 ja 2016-2017. Tutkimuskysymykset kysyvät, millaisia käsityksiä 1. sukupuolesta, 2. sukupuolten tasa-arvosta, ja 3. sukupuolten tasa-arvon edistämisestä esiintyy ACFODE:n Arise-lehdessä vuosina 2013-2014 ja 2016-2017.

Tutkimuksen teoreettisena viitekehyksenä on esitetty aiempia teorioita ja tutkimuksia sukupuolesta, tasa-arvosta ja sukupuolten tasa-arvosta. Teoreettinen viitekehys osoittaa, että termi ”gender” viittaa sosiaaliseen konstruktion, jonka nähdään pääasiassa rakentuvan biologisen sukupuolen päälle. Myös tasa-arvolla on useita määritelmiä, jotka vaihtelevat ajan ja paikan perusteella. Tämän myötä on mielenkiintoista tutkia, miten sukupuoli ja tasa-arvo näyttäytyvät juuri ACFODE:n teksteissä. Tutkimusmenetelmänä tutkimuksessa on laadullinen, aineistolähtöinen sisällönanalyysi, ja aineistona on neljä numeroa ACFODE:n julkaisemaa Arise-lehteä.

Aineistosta sukupuolet käsitetään olevan pääasiassa kaksi – miehet ja naiset. Aineistossa miehet ja naiset nähdään paljolti vastakkainasettelun kautta. Sukupuolten epätasa-arvoa nähdään esiintyvän yhä Ugandassa huolimatta lukuisista yrityksistä häivyttää sukupuolten välistä kuilua esimerkiksi koulutuksessa ja politiikassa. Sukupuolten epätasa-arvon nähdään kohdistuvan etenkin naisiin, mikä on linjassa aiemman tutkimuksen kanssa. Miehet on nähty ugandalaisessa kulttuurissa dominoivina päätöksentekijöinä, kun taas naiset on enimmäkseen käsitetty heikomiksi ja miehistä riippuvaisiksi. ACFODE tiedostaa naisten pystyvän työskentelyyn ja itsenäiseen päätöksentekoon, ja pyrkii teksteissään lisäämään tietoisuutta naisten kykeneväsyydestä ja muuttamaan naisten roolia itsenäisemmäksi.

Aineistossa nähdään, että sukupuolten tasa-arvoa Ugandassa voidaan edistää etenkin naisten oikeuksien parantamisella; naisten äänen kuulemisella, naisten voimaannuttamisella ja antamalla naisille pääsy päätöksentekotehtäviin. Myös miesten rooli nousee aineistossa tärkeäksi naisten oikeuksien ajamisessa, sillä miehillä nähdään olevan enemmän valtaa Ugandan kulttuurissa. Haasteita sukupuolten tasa-arvon edistämiseen tuovat etenkin kuilu lainsäädännön ja tosielämän välillä, syvään juurtuneet kulttuuriset ja uskonnolliset uskomukset esimerkiksi naisten ja miesten erillisistä rooleista sekä naisten liikkeen ajoittainen uhkaava lähestymistyyli, joka voi saada väestön puolustuskannalle. Aineistosta ilmenee, että tärkeää olisi sisällyttää sekä naisia että miehiä päätöksentekotehtäviin ja häivyttää kuilua miesten ja naisten välillä vastakkainasettelun sijaan.

Avainsanat: Uganda, sukupuoli, tasa-arvo, sukupuolten tasa-arvo, kansalaisjärjestöt, naisten oikeudet, kehitys

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1 INTRODUCTION

Gender can affect how citizenship is experienced. According to Järviluoma, Vilkkö and Moisala (2003), gender is embedded and expressed in daily life, and although gender is often considered to have an ideological, discursive or constructed nature, it can also have practical and material consequences. Even though gender is only one part of the total identity of a person, gender cannot be regarded as an unimportant part of the identity, since it can be a factor that “open[s] and close[s] doors in our lives, limit or broaden our possibilities to live our lives to the fullest” (Järviluoma et al., 2003, 6). Expectations of an appropriate behaviour of each gender can affect one’s life if, for instance, doing something is denied or restricted because of one’s gender. One’s gender may also have impact on how one is treated and what kind of expectations there are towards one in the society. For example, Grown, Gupta and Kes (2005) and Järviluoma et al. (2003) mention that gender is constructed socially and culturally, and time and space impacts on how gender is created, constructed and experienced. Therefore, it is important to notice gender in the field of research and examine how experiencing gender can affect the everyday life of people.

It is claimed that gender inequalities exist due to different genders treated differently. For instance, gender gap in educational performance has been a much-discussed subject in international public policy debate (Arnot, David & Weiner, 2001). Especially women are considered to have been treated unequally in the past when compared to men. Sen (1987) states that there is a systematically inferior position for women in many societies, both inside and outside the household. The studies have shown a pattern of sex bias concerning health care, medical attention and nutritional achievements which also leads to sex bias in morbidity and mortality rates. However, gender-based analysis should not be too divisive since poverty, undernourishment, avoidable morbidity and mortality concern men as well as women, and actually everyone in the society (Sen, 1987). Thus, gender is an important factor when analysing development of the whole society or even world.

Empowering women and enhancing their rights is seen as necessary part of development of the world. Coleman (2004) states that women are vital to economic development, active civil society and good governance especially in developing countries. Progress in women’s position has benefitted society, for example in terms of improved living standards (Coleman, 2004). As Sen

(2001b, 473) states, “what begins as a neglect of the interests of women ends up causing adversities in the health and the survival of all, even at an advanced age”. In addition, Sen (1992) states that gender differences and inequality can concern both ‘developing countries’ and ‘advancing societies’ – women may have advantage concerning mortality and survival in the advanced countries, but there can be differences in other areas. Sen (1999) reminds that there are inequalities in different areas in addition to inequality connected to gender, and many people in different parts of the world are denied basic civil rights and political liberty. However, as this thesis focuses on gender equality, the other aspects are not addressed here.

Several national and international policies, non-governmental organizations and women’s movements have come to answer the inequalities in terms of promoting gender equality. Equality between women and men was also mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals among the other seven goals (United Nations [UN], 2000; World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). According to Wejnert (2015), the millennium development goals were designed to improve the world by 2015. The goals included aims of cutting poverty in half, reducing child and maternal mortality, improving environmental indicators, developing health indicators as well as empowering women and eliminating gender disparity in education (Wejnert, 2015). Uganda is said to be “one of the countries that have made deliberate efforts to achieve gender equality in all aspects of life” Kakuru (2008, 36). In addition, Tripp (2001) states that Uganda has been in the lead of women’s movements in Africa.

However, although the legislation aims to equality between the citizens, gender inequalities seem to remain in everyday life of Ugandans, and experiences of the citizens are not necessarily equivalent to the legislation. For example, some of the civil rights, such as the right to gain independent income, to participate in political decision-making, to own land or to have control of one’s own sexuality, are still gendered (Tamale, 2009, as cited in Alava, Bananuka, Ahimbisibwe & Kontinen, 2020), particularly in rural areas of Uganda (Alava et al., 2020). According to several sources (e.g. Atekyereza, 2001; Kakuru, 2008; Porter, 2015), the civil rights of Ugandan women are not at the same level as the rights of Ugandan men. Getting women’s rights on the same level as men’s rights has been seen a way to narrow the gender gap and promoting gender equality – eventually enhancing all citizens no matter of the gender (e.g. Gal, Kowalski & Moore, 2015). However, addressing gender equality and the problems connected to it may be challenging. According to Holli (2012), sometimes the characteristics of specific genders are thought to be determined by nature, god or biology, and therefore the demands of

equality cannot reach there. If something is thought to be determined by biology, nature or religion, people may see it difficult or even impossible to change it.

The aim of this thesis is to examine how gender and gender equality is perceived in the publications of Ugandan gender-advocacy non-governmental organization, Action for Development (ACFODE). It can help identify how gender is experienced by Ugandan gender activists as well as citizens, and how it may affect their lives. The focus of the research is on examining the perceptions of gender, gender equality and improving gender equality in Uganda that emerge from *Arise*-magazine, published by ACFODE, during the years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017. This thesis utilizes qualitative research methods, particularly qualitative data-based content analysis. Data-based analysis is utilized in order to gain information concerning the specific context of ACFODE without theoretical pre-conceptions or pre-determined categories, that might leave something unnoticed in the data.

ACFODE is a Ugandan non-governmental organization, NGO, whose aim is to promote gender equality in Uganda (Kontinen & Ndidde, 2020). It was founded in 1985 and since then it has made success in women-related issues and women's empowerment in Uganda (ACFODE, 2019). ACFODE is a relatively big NGO in Uganda and reaches many people. It is interesting to examine its perceptions as their publications may have influence on many readers and citizens. As Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) state, it is important that the subjects of the research know as much as possible about the phenomenon that is being studied, since qualitative research does not aim to make statistical generations about the phenomenon but to describe and understand it as well as give a theoretically meaningful interpretation to the phenomenon. Since ACFODE has existed for over thirty years for now and has acted to enhance gender equality widely in many parts of Uganda, it can be assumed that as an organization it has quite much experience and knowledge about the issues of gender equality. Investigating how gender and gender equality is experienced by ACFODE and Ugandan citizens can offer new information about citizenship. Besides, studying citizens' and organizations' perceptions concerning gendered citizenship is important from the viewpoint of education, as issues related to gender equality have also been raised in the field of education. For example, girls' access to school in developing countries has been widely discussed. Since it is claimed that NGOs can have an important role in development processes (Barr, Fafchamps & Owens, 2005), it is important to examine how the state of gender equality and especially the ways to improve it is perceived in ACFODE's texts.

However, to understand the perceptions regarding gender equality, I saw it necessary to first analyse how the concept of gender is perceived in Arise. Thus, the first research question concerns how *gender* is perceived in ACFODE's Arise-magazine, and second research question regards how *gender equality* is perceived in those materials. As a lot of expressions mentioning the need to improve gender equality emerged from the data, I also included the third research question into my thesis. The third research question concerns the perceptions *of improving gender equality*. This study is a part of wider research project called CS-learn, which is a project between the University of Oulu and the University of Jyväskylä during years 2018-2022. The CS-learn-project examines how it is learned to be a citizen in a civil society in Tanzania and Uganda (University of Jyväskylä, 2020). ACFODE has been already in the focus of this research team, and this study offers new information concerning ACFODE.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As the subject of my thesis is gender and gender equality, it is first necessary to look at the definitions concerning gender, equality and gender equality. In this chapter I will examine how these concepts have been addressed in prior research and literature. However, I will not present a certain theory as the base of my analysis but instead I offer general considerations about these issues since the main focus of the analysis of this thesis is on the data.

2.1 Gender

Gender and the construction of gender have been widely discussed topics. Järviluoma et al. (2003) state that traditionally sexes and genders have been separated more or less into two categories, men and women or male and female – however, today it is widely acknowledged that also other genders, such as transgenders, exist. Questions have emerged concerning whether gender is a physiological and biological, or a cultural or a psychological issue (Järviluoma et al., 2003). Also, it has been much discussed whether the possible differences between genders are due to genealogy or socialization (Devor, 1989; Martin, 2010), which refers to the long-lasting debate between the impacts of nature and nurture. According to Sen (1987), when investigating development, gender is an important variable in social and economic analysis in addition to other parameters such as class, occupation and family status. If development is examined, gender categories and sex-specific issues cannot be ignored (Sen, 1987).

Usually gender and sex have been seen through a distinction that views *sex* as a physiological and biological and *gender* as a socially and culturally constructed issue (Andersen, 1988; Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Devor, 1989; Gailey, 1987; Rossi, 2010). Gender has been seen as a result of a cultural socialization process (Persadie, 2012) referring to the asymmetrical social constructs of femininity and masculinity, thus differing from ostensibly ‘biological’ differences between male and female (True, 2013). Usually the biological sex has been seen as the base of gendered expectations in the society, nevertheless the biological sex does not always correspond with one’s gender identity (Andersen, 1988). However, the view according to which gender is a social construction of sex has been criticized by Järviluoma et al. (2003) and Butler (2007), who see both the ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ as socially constructed, since the perceptions of biology are also based on people’s cultural and social knowledge.

According to Grown et al. (2005), gender is a social construct that defines, for example, the responsibilities, rights and roles of men and women. It is also stated that there are biological differences between females and males acting as a basis for social norms. The social norms, in turn, determine the appropriate roles and behaviours of men and women as well as define the differential power in several areas between the sexes (Grown et al., 2005). Although it is widely agreed that gender is a social constructed issue, many still see gender as a natural phenomenon and behavioural roles as unchangeable and determined by biology (Martin, 2010).

According to Rossi (2010), it is usual that genders, sexes are understood through confrontation; it is often talked about the “opposite sex”, and if someone is different to the prevalent system, one is easily seen as abnormal. The distinction of genders is often explained by physiological differences, but this kind of view has also been seen problematic (Rossi, 2010). Not everyone fits in to a strict model of ‘man’ or ‘woman’, and biological factors should not solely determine a person. Also, Martin (2010) states that culture reinforces the expectations, values and norms that are considered ‘traditional’ for women and men. If someone differentiates from these prescribed expectations and norms that define the appropriate behaviour, one easily becomes a victim of social exclusion, ridicule and isolation (Martin, 2010). These examples show the limitedness of division of genders.

It has also been discussed whether the possible differences between the genders are due to biology or socialization. It is suggested that nowadays it is preferred to use ‘gender’ instead of ‘sex’, because it emphasizes the role of socio-cultural factors in the construction of gender (Rossi, 2010), and that the distinctions between genders arise more from cultural than biological sources (Archer & Lloyd, 2002). For example, Tannen (1994) claims that seeing that the differences arise from only biological factors has been considered problematic, because then it would be quite impossible to socially change, for example, inequalities that arise from ‘biological’ differences of the genders. In addition, Andersen (1988) claims that there have been inadequate explanations of sex differences based only on biological explanations. On the other hand, seeing that only social factors impact on the differences between gender is considered problematic because then it would be possible to change whatever one does not like in the environment, but actually cultural patterns are quite resistant to change (Tannen, 1994). Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that the differences between genders arise from both biological and cultural sources (Andersen, 1988; Archer & Lloyd, 2002).

Time, place and situation impacts on the characteristics that define gender (Devor, 1989; Järviluoma et al., 2003), for example what is considered as feminine and masculine behaviour. For instance, according to Järviluoma et al. (2003), the socio-cultural expectations and possibilities of each gender vary depending on time and space. Many social factors, such as age, race, ethnicity and class come into play when constructing gender. In addition to seeing gender as socially and culturally constructed issue and studying gender roles, it should be taken into account what mechanisms are involved in constructing these roles (Järviluoma et al., 2003). Even though this thesis focuses on gender, it is notable that perceptions of sexualities and genders, for example hetero-/homosexual men and women, bisexuals, homosexuals, transgenders, intergender as well as attitudes towards them can strongly vary depending on the place and period of time – also sexualities are often seen through confrontation (Rossi, 2010). Thus, it can be concluded that the concept of gender may be different in different cultures (Persadie, 2012). In addition, it should be noticed that gender identity is not the same thing as gender role. These concepts connect with each other, but gender identity concerns to what one feels oneself to be whereas gender role refers to adapted social roles. In addition, one person may have several contradictory gender identities at the same time (Järviluoma et al., 2003), and gender is one of the many identities of a person (Sen, 1987).

Deaux and Kite (1987) present a gender belief system that includes views, beliefs and stereotypes about different genders, and about the appropriate behaviour and roles of the genders. In addition, opinions about the ideal straits of femininity and masculinity are part of this system, as well as attitudes towards individuals who are considered to differ from the system. These views are usually shared within a society or culture and therefore they may be called normative (Deaux & Kite, 1987). This system includes opinions how one should behave depending on one's gender, and thus may strongly impact on the daily life of the individuals in a society. According to Järviluoma et al. (2003) gender forms a background for social actions and arrangements, hence there are several gendered actions existing. Thus, "often our gendered understandings of the world and its phenomena are hierarchically ordered; certain qualities are accorded more value and respect than others because of the nature of their gendering" (Järviluoma et al., 2003, 5). In the childhood, different sets of attitudes, values and interests are addressed to girls and boys (Konrad, Corrigan, Lieb & Ritchie, 2000). According to Martin (2010), gender stereotypes may lead to low expectations of the stereotyped groups and to gender discrimination. For instance, if there are low expectations for women for aiming to non-tradi-

tional field, they are less likely to be hired because of stereotypes. Negative stereotypes of gender may affect what people expect for themselves and how they live up to those expectations. If there are low expectations towards people, they may expect little on an individual level (Martin, 2010).

Gender studies have been described as very interdisciplinary (Tannen, 1994). According to Järviluoma et al. (2003, 2), gender studies focus on examining “how the categories of men and women, masculinity and femininity, as well as possible other gender categories, are socially constructed”. According to Järviluoma et al. (2003), multiple masculinities and femininities should be acknowledged since people in different contexts do not necessarily correspond to the reality of only one masculinity or femininity. Gender has been widely studied especially in the field of feminist and women’s studies. Although there have been gender studies in the field of radical feminism, there are studies in the field of other political positions too and without feminist content. Critical feminist theory critically studies the contemporary social world and the asymmetric gender differences that are produced, maintained and resisted there, and feminist research has provided the strongest theoretical innovations and foundations for gender studies in general, but also other fields have promoted gender studies. Besides, feminism is quite a multidisciplinary field today, and we cannot speak of a single, but various approaches to feminism. In addition, even though much attention has been paid to women’s studies, there have also been men’s studies and research of masculinities in the field of gender studies (Järviluoma et al., 2003). Besides, although it is often thought that feminist view denies the biology, Rossi (2010) reminds that it does not deny biology but criticizes the view of seeing only biology as a determining factor in human behaviour.

In the light of above discussed theories, it can be assumed that the experiences of gender and sex do not depend only on biology but also on cultural and social constructions. In addition, time and space impacts on the experience of gender and views about what is considered as ideal characteristics or behaviour of each gender. These views may be very different depending on the society, culture and the period of time. Thus, it is important and interesting to study how gender is perceived specifically in ACFODE’s materials that represent the view of Ugandan women’s organization during the certain period of time.

2.2 Equality

When investigating the perceptions of gender equality, it is first necessary to examine what is meant by “equality”. As Baker, Lynch, Cantillon and Walsh (2009) claim, inequality is a fact that affects the whole world. Still, thinking what equality is, and how there could be more equality in the world, can cause confusion, partly because there are different conceptions about equality (Douglas & Devins, 1998; Holli, 2012) and meanings attached to it (Westen, 1990). Sometimes it may be difficult to determine what kind of measurements are used when evaluating equality. Also, according to Sen (1992), there is heterogeneity among people which leads to differences in the assessment of equality, and different people evaluate equality measured by different variables – thus, it is relevant to ask the question ‘equality of what?’. As Holli (2012) claims, equality is not a stable and unambiguous issue, but a very diverse and localized, constantly changing concept that impacts on the construction of the society. Today there are different meanings connected to equality than in the past (Holli, 2012). Hence, time and place affect how the concept of equality is understood. However, there have been made some general conceptualisations about equality, and I will present some of them in this chapter.

According to Baker et al. (2009), equality can concern both groups or individuals, and people can be unequal or equal in different ways. Douglas and Devins (1998, 4) state that equality has often been described as “the elimination of formal legal barriers of exclusion based on certain immutable characteristics such as race and gender”. As Holli (2012) states, the contents of equality are connected to specific problems of a certain time and place as well as to the expectations that are based on a certain context. The demands of equality derive from what is considered unjust and something that can be societally changed (Holli, 2012).

As Holli states (2012), especially philosophers have pondered what equality is and what kind of relations it has to other important societal values, such as freedom, justice and democracy. The basic starting point is usually the axiom already mentioned by Aristotle: similar and equivalent people must be treated at the same way, and different people in a different way, if there are no reasons for other arrangements (Holli, 2012). Aristotle also stated that equality can be examined from the viewpoint of *arithmetic* and *relative* equality (Raunio, 1995). Arithmetic equality is present when each participant gets the same amount of a good that is being shared, and nobody gets a greater part. Nevertheless, this view has often been considered too simple and restricted, even impossible in the modern, complex world (Raunio, 1995). Sen (1979) agrees that seeing equality only through primary goods is too limited view, since differently

located and constructed people need different amounts of primary goods to satisfy the same needs. It is not meaningful to focus on goods as such but maybe more on what goods do to human beings (Sen, 1979).

According to Raunio (1995) relative equality, on the other hand, is often present when speaking of a whole society. It is about everyone being equal in relation to predetermined criteria. Aristotle suggest that everyone should be equal in relation to the merits, and the alternative for this is that everyone should get rewards and goods according to their need. Thus, people are equal when everyone gets what they need. However, being equal in terms of merits and being equal in terms of getting what each person needs cannot necessarily happen at the same time and thus this view may bring challenges (Raunio, 1995). Nousiainen (2012) reminds that Aristotle did not think that all people are equivalent – for example it was justified to place some people as slaves since they were ‘naturally’ good for it. People are different due to their merits, and that impacts on dividing the resources (Nousiainen, 2012). Thus, the concept of equality has begun to separate from the Aristotelian interpretation that connect equality only with similarity and the same treatment of similar people (Holli, 2012). After all, some of the philosophical views seem to be outdated and therefore cannot be directly applied into modern world. However, according to Holli (2012), philosophical considerations can advise measuring the state of equality in the modern world, for example, when examining how a part of society, such as education or work, fulfils the criteria that have been determined by the philosophical views of equality. It is often pondered which of these views gives ‘the best’ or ‘right’ definition to equality. The criterion of whether equality is actualized or not, is often measured by equal treatment, equal assignments and equal salary of people (Holli, 2012).

Equality can also be investigated from two perspectives; equality of opportunities (*formal equality*) and equality of results (*relative equality*) (Holli, 2012; Persadie, 2012; Pojman, 1995). Formal equality concerns the legal position, legislation and the same rights and possibilities of people, that are written on policies. Relative equality, in turn, addresses how people from different conditions can use these rights in their life and achieve the same results regarding, for instance, education, work or political power. The difference between these approaches can be seen in a situation in which there are same opportunities for two individuals on paper yet in real life there still are obstacles for the other person. Holli (2012) presents an example of women and men; they both have the same opportunities, on paper, to participate in political field, but women are still often expected to prioritise staying at home with children, and these expecta-

tions can act as an obstacle for her to make achievements in her career. Thus, there is a difference between formal and relative equality, and other one can be fulfilled without the other. It is possible to evaluate equality from the viewpoint of whether the minimum requisitions set by the legislation are met in the reality (Holli, 2012).

In addition, Baker et al. (2009) introduce several fields of inequalities that can be used when evaluating whether equality has actualized or not; inequality of economic resources, inequality of respect and recognition, inequality of power, inequality of learning and working and inequality of love, care and solidarity. Inequality of economic resources concerns the uneven dividing of incomes. Inequality of respect and recognition may concern, for example, different genders, sexualities, races and people with disabilities. Inequality of power is present, for instance, when an authoritarian state denies their citizens some rights. Inequality of learning and working concerns cases in which someone may be at disadvantage compared to others due to, for example being a part of minority, disabled or otherwise considered to belong in a marginalized group. Inequality of love, care and solidarity is talked about, for example, when children are abused by those who have institutional control over them or their parents. Factors that shape inequalities include for example class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and ethnicity (Baker et al., 2009).

According to Sen (1992), equality is evaluated by comparing some particular aspect of a person, such as income, wealth, happiness, liberty, opportunities, rights, need-fulfilments, to the same aspect of another person. However, equality in one area does not necessarily mean equality in other area. For example, even if people have same, equal opportunities, they may have unequal incomes. Also, equal incomes may not bring equal wealth, and equal wealth does not bring equal happiness, and so on. This all is because the heterogeneity of people affects how these variables are experienced. There would not be such disharmony between the variables of equality if every person were the same. Thus, the diversity of human beings must be noticed in assessment of equality (Sen, 1992).

2.3 Gender equality

Since the subject of this thesis is gender and gender equality, it is reasonable to look further into equality from the viewpoint of gender. As equality in general, Sen (2001b) states that also gender equality has to be approached as a heterogeneous issue consisting of disparate and inter-linked problems. Gender inequality exists in many parts of the world; however, it can appear in

different forms and is not the same in every place. There may be gender inequalities regarding, for example, mortality rates, natality inequality, inequality in opportunities and facilities as well as in education, work, household and ownership (Sen, 2001b). Gender equality is described as an issue that concerns “women and men’s equal access to resources and power to influence decisions, and empowerment is the process through which this state is achieved” (Standal and Winther, 2016, 29).

Sen (1987; 2001b) states that there are unequal sharing of the adversities and socially created asymmetries between the genders, for instance in education and work. In addition, gender gap in educational performance has been a much discussed subject in international public policy debate, and there has been a “range of public policy strategies promoting equality in relation to gender as well as class, ‘race’, ethnicity, sexuality and disability” (Arnot et al., 2001, 3). Although women have made notable academic, occupational and social achievements during the past 50 years (Martin, 2010), several sources speak about the multiple and complex inequalities that especially women still face (Baker et al., 2009; Martin, 2010; Sen, 1992). There may be disbelief about women being able to do certain types of jobs, disparities in the freedoms that women and men enjoy, cultural neglect of the needs of women as well as excess mortality of women due to gender bias in the distribution of necessities (Sen, 1987; 1992; 1999). Women may be considered to be weaker than men and lack commitment to their job since they may leave work for getting pregnant, or it may be assumed that they cannot work long hours since they have responsibilities at home (Martin, 2010).

According to Sen (1999), the disparities concern recourses and incomes as well as differential treatment of men and women and boys and girls in many areas of the world, for example in rural families of north Africa and Asia. Gender bias against women concerning mortality, morbidity and nutrition is less present in sub-Saharan Africa, but, on the other hand, there are gender differences concerning other capabilities such as the ability to read and write, the ability to avoid bodily mutilation and being free to work in leadership positions or aim at independent careers (Sen, 1992). Sen (2001a) claims that for example women’s lack of literacy, employment opportunities and economic independence contribute to inequalities towards women. This leads to women’s voices not being heard in the family or a society. There may also be cultural and religious factors that affect women’s life (Sen, 2001a) According to Sen (1987), the problems that women face affect not only the lives of women but also to the ability of the whole household to make contribution to the economic status of the family. Creating a difference within the household enhances much if the members of the household earn outside home (Sen, 1987).

According to Youngs (2004), masculine identity is often connected to economic and political power as well as influence and decision-making – in other words, public sphere. On the other hand, feminine identity is often attached to private sphere which includes mainly home and family. That often leads to unequal status of work since the public sphere includes the paid work and private sphere includes the unpaid or low paid work (Youngs, 2004).

Grown et al. (2005) claim that although the social norms connected to gender and sex vary in different societies and periods of time, it has been usual that the norms favour men and boys. It is argued that in many places the norms give men and boys better access to resources, opportunities and capabilities compared to women, whereas access to these things is important in order to enjoy well-being as well as social, economic and political power (Grown et al., 2005). Sen (2001b) claims that in many places of the world women receive less health care and attention compared to men, and girls less support than boys. There can be different variations of gender inequality, and one place can move from one kind of gender inequality to another over time. Different types of inequality can also nourish each other, and it can be examined how they are connected (Sen, 2001b). However, Grown et al. (2005) note that there are norms and policies that impact negatively on men and boys, too. There has been even more progress regarding women's independence and participation until now, but it is still important to notice that inequalities based on gender have existed and continue to exist especially in some parts of the world.

Baker et al. (2009) remind that there is much diversity among women, and besides being a woman, other factors can cause disadvantages or advantages for them. These factors include age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, class and possible disabilities. Women can also be subordinated to other women due to these factors. Hence, the inequalities based on gender also interact with the other fields of inequality (Baker et al., 2009). This view can, of course, be applied to men, too. Also, Sen (2001b) reminds that gender inequality can negatively affect the lives of men and boys. In order to fully understand the “evil” of gender inequality, it is reasonable to look beyond the challenges that women face and investigate also problems that men face because of uneven treatment of women (Sen, 2001b).

As equality in general, also gender equality can be examined from the perspectives of equality of opportunities (formal or abstract equality) and substantive equality (equality of outcome) (Persadie, 2012; Pojman, 1995). Formal gender equality is guaranteed by legislation and national constitutions and they, in turn, provide for procedural equality. Substantive equality, on

the other hand, concerns the actual lived experiences, interests and needs of women. However, there is a gap between procedural equality and substantive equality. Many inequalities still exist because of a lack of understanding and implementation of the law (Martin, 2010). Also, the cultural expectations may sometimes run over the equality that is guaranteed in legislation. For example, sometimes women are believed and expected to spend more time at home and take care of the children more than men, which causes challenges for woman's career, even though women have the same opportunity than men on the paper (Holli, 2012). Women who differ from the expectations about women prioritizing taking care of the home and children are often viewed with judgement (Martin, 2010). Thus, it is important that both formal and substantive equality are provided for individuals, not only formal equality by legislation (Persadie, 2012).

According to Baker et al. (2009), inequalities have been addressed in social movements. For example, gender inequality is strongly promoted in women's movement. In addition, there are social movements, such human rights movement, that are not tied to a certain social division but have an overall egalitarian agenda. Besides the social movements, states and governments have addressed inequalities by legislation and policies (Baker et al., 2009). Men's engagement is a necessary part of promoting the situation of women and they can, for instance, work as partners with women and by that bring changes in the norms and roles connected to gender and eventually benefit both women and men (Grown et al., 2005). However, Sen (1987) reminds that the groups that are deprived may be also habituated to inequality or unaware of the possibility of social change. Part of the problem is that unequal practices are not seen as unjust since these practices have been taken place and accepted for a long time. (Sen, 2001a).

As Pojman (1995) claims, justice means treating people equally, and egalitarian ideas of justice create a base for, for instance, affirmative action policies and civil rights legislation. Douglas and Devins (1998) mention that affirmative action programs in employment and education have given preference to women and members of certain racial minority groups. Sen (2001b) claims that ways to improve the situation of women and girls are, among others, women's gainful employment, women's education and the literacy of women. Women's own agency for example in economy and politics is connected to social achievements in many countries, and improvement of women's capabilities affects the lives of all, not only women's lives (Sen, 2001b). Enhancing women's employment opportunities, literacy and family planning facilities and access to public discussion are ways to improve women's role in decision-making in family (Sen, 2001a).

According to Sen (1999), women's active agency and ability to earn independent income and go to work outside home as well as having ownership rights, education and literacy enhance women's wellbeing. Women's ability to earn independent income, work outside home, have ownership rights and literacy and be educate participants in decisions within and outside the family increases the respect and regard for women's wellbeing. Thus, women's active agency is important in order to remove the iniquities that depress the wellbeing of women. Thus, independence and empowerment help hearing women's voice and enhance social status of a woman in the society and in household. The limited role of women's active agency impacts on lives of others, too, including men, women, children and adults. When a woman is not dependent on others, her contribution to the prosperity of the family is more visible. Going to work outside home as well as education enhance women's agency in terms of learning more skills and getting information. If a woman has ownership right to property, it can positively impact on the power that she has in family decisions (Sen, 1999).

Women's empowerment can be seen as a part of gender equality as it aims to narrow the gender gap and decrease gender inequalities. In the recent years, women's rights and gender equality have been increasingly important part of development studies. Supporting women's and girls' empowerment and education is said to have a positive impact on the advancement of the whole developing world (World Bank, 2012, as cited in Gal et al. 2015). Women's empowerment and gender equality also have an important role as a key to development on the international agenda (Standal & Winther, 2016). Mwaseba & Kaarhus (2015) agree the socially constructed relations between women and men have become important issues in development strategies.

The prior literature, therefore, suggests that there have been, and continue to be, inequalities based on gender in different parts of the world. There has been progress in advancing gender equality. As the data of my research is collected from the recent years, it can provide up-to-date perspective on how gender equality is experienced and perceived in a specific context of a Ugandan gender-advocacy non-governmental organisation.

3 THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

The context of the research is Uganda. Before moving on to interpret the perceptions emerging from the publications of Ugandan NGO, ACFODE, it is important to familiarize ourselves with the general context of Uganda. For example, Remes (2011) mentions that the researcher must be familiar with the culture that is the focus of her research. After introducing the context of the research, it is easier for the reader to understand the results in the right context. Thus, I will present the context of the research in this chapter, including information about Uganda, non-governmental organizations and prior research or knowledge about gender equality in Uganda. According to Alava et al. (2020), historical events, especially colonialism, have impacted on people's lives, and the history still influences how citizenship is experienced and constituted in today's Uganda. It is thus important to take historical context into account when viewing Ugandan experiences of citizenship (Alava et al., 2020).

3.1 Uganda

According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2019), the population of Uganda in mid-year 2019 was projected to be 40,3 million. The urban population in mid-2017 was projected to be 9,4 million (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS], 2018). Uganda's total area is 241,554.96 km² (UBOS, 2019). Uganda's capital city is Kampala. According to Alava et al. (2020), the official languages of Uganda are Kiswahili and English. The governance is republic with multiparty system and executive president. There are several different religions present in Uganda – most dominant being Christianity (84,5% of the population) and Islam (13,7% of the population). Uganda comprises of several ethnical groups; Baganda 16,5 %, Banyankore 9,6%, Basoga 8,8% Bakiga 7,1%, Iteso 7,0%, Langi 6,3%, Bagisu 4,9%, Acholi 4,4%, Lubgara 3,3% and other 32,1%. The literacy rate in Uganda among 15-year-old and older was 70,2% in 2012. Estimated employment percentage among 15-year-olds and older was 69,2% in 2017 (Alava et al., 2020).

Uganda has quite an eventful history with a few leaders, and according to Alava et al. (2020), the history continues to affect today's Uganda and the citizens. Most parts of Uganda were annexed as a British protectorate in 1894, and the colonial rule in Uganda was not abandoned until 1962 when Uganda gained independence. After the British annexation, there were several politically and socially heterogenous groups in Uganda, and a few ethnic divisions have

strengthened in Uganda due to the colonial rule. The various areas of Uganda were treated differently by the British during the colonial era, which led to differences in how the colonial rule was experienced by the different peoples within Uganda. These events continue to impact on how citizenship is experienced by today's Ugandans (Alava et al., 2020).

As Alava et al. (2020) states, after Uganda gained independence in 1962, the new constitution was proclaimed but soon discarded by Prime Minister Milton Obote in 1967. Obote also positioned himself as the new executive president. However, after that Obote's place was taken by the army commander, Idi Amin, in 1971, that led to an era that has been described as a "reign of terror and dictatorship" (Alava et al., 2020, 59). Alava et al. (2020) continue that finally, Idi Amin was defeated by the combined forces of exiled Ugandans and Tanzanian forces in 1979, and Milton Obote returned as a president in 1981 election. Several people were not content with the increasing violence during Obote's second regime, which led to the rise of resistance. It was led by the National Resistance Movement, NRM, with Yoweri Museveni as the leader. Later this resistance has been known as the Bush War (1981-1986). Eventually, the NRM took over Kampala and announced Museveni as a president in 1986 (Alava et al., 2020). Kontinen and Ndidde (2020) mention that ACFODE has also been collaborating with the NRM since the NRM government was offering an environment that supported women's empowerment agenda. ACFODE was lobbying the NRM with aims e.g. to develop the national networks for women, give women seats at governance and engage in the process of making the constitution (Kontinen & Ndidde, 2020). Museveni remains the president of Uganda today, and already has been nominated as NRM's only candidate for the 2021 election Alava et al. (2020).

According to Tushabe (2009), since the colonization, the policies and practices in Uganda have encouraged men more than women. The practices and policies have encouraged male citizens to attend schools, join the army and become professionals – this kind of practice encourages them to leave their mothers, wives and sisters at home to take care of the elderly and the children (Tushabe, 2009). This may have created a base for the inequalities that have been seen in today's Uganda, which will be further discussed in chapter 2.3.

3.2 Non-governmental organizations

In this chapter I will describe non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in general and investigate the situation of NGOs in Uganda and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. The first chapter addresses NGOs globally and in sub-Saharan Africa, and the second chapter looks particularly into women's NGOs in Uganda. Finally, I will describe ACFODE which is one of the Ugandan women's NGOs.

3.2.1 NGOs globally and in sub-Saharan Africa

The involvement of non-governmental organizations in development processes have increased in the last decade (Barr et al., 2005). Brass (2016) mentions that NGOs have been described as private organizations that aim to improve society in some way without receiving profit. However, there is heterogeneity and variation in the NGO sector (Barr et al., 2005; Brass, 2016); for example where organizations are founded (or where their headquarters are); how widely their activity is spread; what is their source of funding; whether it is a professionalized organization or a membership association (Brass, 2016). There is sometimes challenges included in the field of NGOs, for example NGOs may feel more accountable to donors rather than to the local population (DENIVA, 2006).

According to Barr, Fafchamps and Owens (2003) Ugandan NGO sector is a form of charity work with the aim of helping poorer members of the society. Indeed, NGOs are described as not motivated by searching for profit but rather having a charitable purpose or the aim of serving the interests of their members (Barr et al., 2003). According to Barr et al. (2005), Uganda's NGO sector includes many small organizations that are headed by highly educated Ugandans. The activities of Ugandan NGOs often reflect the agenda and concerns of international governmental and non-governmental agencies. The NGOs in Uganda are also less monitored by the government and more by donors (Barr et al., 2005).

There has been growth in the number of NGOs over the past three decades both in developing countries and globally (Brass, Longhofer, Robinson & Schnable, 2018). The amount of both national and international NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa considerably rose between the years 1980 and 2010 (Girei, 2011). Since NGOs are increasingly involved in development and welfare objectives (Barr et al., 2003), they can help make the voice of the citizens heard and their

concerns, such as basic needs, people's marginalisation and human rights, addressed (DENIVA, 2006).

NGOs can have an important role in informing people about their rights (Porter, 2015), and they can also provide services, advocate vulnerable groups or catalyse social capital (Barr et al., 2005). Kakuru (2008) states that NGOs have supported women's movement and improved women's education and leadership opportunities. Women's organizations have listed the education of women and girls high on their priorities. However, it is claimed that achieving educational gender equality is not successful enough, and women's activism should concentrate on more practical ways to improve gender equality instead of theoretical engagement. Better children's school requirements and medical care for HIV and AIDS patients, especially in rural areas, are examples of how to practically advance gender equality in education (Kakuru, 2008).

3.2.2 Women's NGOs in Uganda

In Uganda's *Non-Governmental Organisations Act* (The Republic of Uganda, 2016), NGO is described as "a legally constituted non-governmental organisation under this Act, which may be a private voluntary grouping of individuals or associations established to provide voluntary services to the community or any part, but not for profit or commercial purposes". The formal national level and grassroots level women's organizations are registered as NGOs by the government in Uganda (Tushabe, 2009).

According to Tushabe (2009), a few women's organizations were established during Uganda's colonial days (1894-1962) including *the Mother's Union for Protestant Women* and *the Uganda Muslim Women's Society*. *The Uganda Women's League* was an umbrella organization for all of them (Tripp, 2000). Tushabe (2009) claims that these organizations were based on faith, their focus being mainly on pertaining to appropriate motherhood, housewifery, good Muslim and Christian living and home management. These organizations were initiated and sponsored by the Christian missionaries and the wives of colonial administrators (Tushabe, 2009).

There have been (political) challenges in the history of women's activism and the feminist movement in Uganda. According to Tripp (2000), the women's organizations at the national level became closely attached to the government during the regimes of Idi Amin (1971-1979) and Obote II (1980-1984). National Council of Women (NCW) was established in 1978, and

after that president Idi Amin banned all other women's organizations (Tripp, 2000). Nevertheless, according to Kakuru (2008), there was a turning point in Uganda's women's activism in 1985 when the women's conference was held. The challenges faced by women's activism were "an impetus for a more independent women's movement" (Kakuru, 2008, 38). In the mid-1980's, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) involved more women in leadership (Tripp, 2000). As mentioned above, ACFODE was also collaborating with the NRM and Museveni. The NRM government founded *the Ministry of Women in Development* in 1986, currently named *the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development* (Kakuru, 2008). Later, according to Tushabe (2009) there have been established more modern women's organizations such as ACFODE and Ekikwenza Omubi, which prioritized autonomy from the government. These organizations were founded shortly before the NRM government began ruling in 1986 – ACFODE acting at the national level and Ekikwenza Omubi at the grassroots level. Quickly after the establishment, the organizations gained power too (Tushabe, 2009).

According to Porter (2015), there are many NGOs in Uganda, and they have made efforts, for instance to prevent gender-based violence. All sub-counties in Uganda have a lead NGO that partners with local government authorities. Despite this, the female citizens might not be aware of the services provided by the organizations or how to access them, for example in the case of rape. In some cases, even though the women have knowledge about the organizations, few takes advantage of the opportunities they offer. In Porter's study, four out of 94 women interviewed had interacted with NGOs after being raped. Besides the lack of awareness, there might be powerful social constraints that restrict women from using NGOs services. Relatives often have an important role in decision-making that can affect the use of NGO services, too porter (Porter, 2015). Tushabe (2009) states that women's right activists in Uganda have been trying to get *the Domestic Relations Bill* passed for over a decade. Domestic Relations Bill would "protect women from rape, defilement and unwanted pregnancy". Nevertheless, Tushabe mentions government do not prioritize women's needs, power and knowledge due to "unequal relations of power among different genders" (Tushabe, 2009). Girei (2011) states the valuation of NGOs has grown and they are increasingly participating in development processes of of Uganda and in many other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Sen (1999), advancing women's rights is not only about enhancing their well-being but also improving the rights that are aimed at the free agency of women. Enhancing women's well-being was an important objective of the women's movement in the past, since women have been treated badly. However, it has also been emphasized that women themselves

should be active agents and not seen as only passive recipients who receive help concerning their wellbeing. Seeing women as active and capable to make a change and impact on the lives of both women and men is vital so that they are recognized as responsible people who can act or refuse to act. To see women only through the well-being approach would end up in a restricted view of women (Sen, 1999).

Kakuru (2008) claims that, in addition to ACFODE, there are other women's organizations/asociations, such as ACTIONAID Uganda, FIDA (*Federation of Uganda Women Lawyers*), Fawe (U) (*Forum for African Women Educationalists*), Uganda, and UCRNN (*Uganda Child Rights NGO Network*). These organizations have also supported (poor) girls' education and undertaken activities such as community mobilization, sensitization and sanitation improvisation in some schools (Kakuru, 2008).

3.2.3 Action for Development, ACFODE

ACFODE, a Ugandan gender-advocacy organisation that has been established in 1985 (Ahimbisibwe, Ndidde & Kontinen, 2020; Kontinen & Ndidde, 2020). ACFODE (2019) states that women's empowerment is one of its aims. As Ahimbisibwe et al. (2020) claim, ACFODE has been a great actor in championing for women's empowerment through formulating gender policy, making research, building capacities and coalitions as well as through mobilization and sensitization. According to Standal & Winther (2016, 28), empowerment is a "process in which individuals, groups or societies move from being marginalised through poverty, ethnicity, gender or other discriminating relations and markers to a state of equality". ACFODE's mission is to empower women and girl as well as influence policy and legislation in order to reach gender equality in Uganda (ACFODE, 2019).

Tushabe (2009) claims that ACFODE consists of highly educated, professional, elite women. ACFODE interacts with women internationally through organizations like the United Nations. ACFODE has made effective achievements, including enforcing the NRM government to create a ministry for women. ACFODE also made sure that there is a women's desk in every ministry, and that all levels of local government have women's representation. ACFODE also has promoted the rights of disabled people - as Tushabe claims, ACFODE pushes for gender balance and disability consciousness in the development and governance of the nation (Tushabe, 2009).

3.3 Gender equality in Uganda

The state of gender equality in Uganda has been addressed in several researches. Although the main focus of my thesis is to make a data-based analysis, I will introduce some of the prior research and literature that has addressed gender equality in Uganda in order to locate this thesis onto the field of prior research.

Kakuru (2008, 38) describes Uganda as “one of the countries that have made deliberate efforts to achieve gender equality in all aspects of life”. Gender equality is thus an issue that is taken seriously in Uganda. According to Kakuru (2008), the efforts that Uganda has made include the establishment of *the Ministry in charge of women and gender affairs* in 1986, *the National Gender policy* in 1997, and *the National Action Plan of women* in 1999. Achieving gender equality is also in the focus of Uganda’s education sector; for example, the implementation of *Universal Primary Education* (UPE) in 1997 aimed to accomplish gender equality in schools. After the implementation of UPE in Uganda, school enrolment increased, and the gender gap narrowed. It also benefitted the disabled, poor and rural children who would not have been able to go to school otherwise (Kakuru, 2008). In Kakuru’s (2008) study, girls’ enrolment was higher than boys’ enrolment in some districts. Despite girls increased enrolment, the total equality was still not guaranteed (e.g. in terms of achievements). Girls’ dropout rates are often higher than boys’ dropout rates (Kakuru, 2008).

Although girls’ enrolment in school has been achieved, there still are challenges on how to keep the girls enrolled in school (Kakuru, 2008). Atekyereza (2001) states that the enrolment in the first grade is often equal for girls and boys, but from the fourth grade the dropout rate is higher for girls. Hence, only few girls have access to higher education. Some of the reasons for girls’ higher dropout rates are early marriages, pregnancies and the lack of funds (Atekyereza, 2001). Kakuru (2008) claims that many household practices cause hindrance to girls’ education, and this is the area where Uganda’s women’s activism has not yet made success. HIV or AIDS may be one of the reasons of persistent educational inequality. Some of the civil society organizations, including women’s organizations, have supported the education of children who are affected by HIV or AIDS, by, for example, providing school materials and funds to pay tuition fees. However, very little psychosocial support has been given to the children. Kakuru states that kind of support is not effective enough to guarantee the achievement of gender equality in schools, and the ineffectiveness of the support can cause the still unsatisfactory educational outcomes especially for girls (Kakuru, 2008).

Atekyereza (2001) states that some families prefer to send their sons to school instead of the daughters. There are many reasons why sons are sent to school more often than girls. For example, some parents think that the children's educational benefits are not enjoyed by the family of origin but the family into which the daughter marries – the educated boy, on the other hand, can assist his parents when they grow old. Nevertheless, some parents think that both girls and boys need knowledge to be able to be employed and assist their family and community in the future. Besides, the employment is no longer based on ascribed but achieved roles – thus the children of both sexes are equal in the contemporary community (Atekyereza, 2001). This, in turn, indicates that there is not such strong gender inequality anymore.

According to UBOS (2018; 2019), the enrolment rate of females in pre-primary school was greater than the enrolment rate of males during years 2013-2017. UBOS (2018) states that sometimes there have been a bigger percentage of females completing primary school. However, there were more males than females attending and completing higher levels of education and transiting to next levels (UBOS, 2018; 2019). When it comes to working life, according to UBOS (2019), in 2016/2017, Uganda's working population was estimated at 15 million. The proportion of working females was 51%, whereas that of the males was 49%. However, male's employment rate in paid work was higher (46%) than that of females (28%). 38% of the total population were in paid employment, whereas 50% of the population were own account workers. According to the statistics, there was no major gender disparities regarding the rate of professionals (UBOS, 2019). Standal & Winther (2016) claim that women tend to take part in unwaged care work (taking care of children, cleaning, cooking), that usually is considered less valuable than men's paid work since it is linked to women and happens in the private sphere. Porter (2015) claims that women often want to maintain social harmony in the community. This added to the strong decision-making power of the families of women, women may not demand rights for themselves, although their knowledge about their own rights is growing (e.g. due to NGO activity and talk about human rights). For example, women do not always tell anybody about the crimes if it can cause conflicts between the clans or within a community (Porter, 2015).

Uganda's culture has been described as patriarchal (Asiimwe, 2017; Hayhurst, 2014; Porter, 2015) - for example due to men's more powerful role at decision making Tushabe (2009) claims that the policies and practices in Uganda have encouraged men more than women since the colonialization. Male citizens have been encouraged to get educated and work outside home, whereas the place of female citizens have been seen at home taking care of the children and

elderly (Tushabe, 2009). Also, Hayhurst (2014) states that girls and women are “often subjected to the discipline” of their fathers or husbands and according to Porter (2015), family often decides what is the best reaction to wrongdoings such as rape. There is also a practice of “bride-price” in Uganda, and according to Hague, Thiara and Turner (2011), this practice gives men rights over their wives and children and assumes that woman is like a product that can be acquired. These all indicate that Ugandan culture is, in places, patriarchal one in which men usually have more power than men. However, it cannot be generalised that every man has authority over women, or every woman is less powerful than men.

4 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will introduce the research methodology of my thesis. First, I will present my research questions. Next, I will introduce the research and analysis methods as well as the research data and analysis process. I have chosen qualitative research methods and qualitative data-based content analysis as the analysis method, and I will introduce them in more detail in the chapters 4.2 and 4.3. In the chapter 4.5 I will introduce the analysis process.

4.1 Research questions

My research questions are the following:

1. How is *gender* perceived in ACFODE's *Arise*-magazine's issues during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017?
2. How is *gender equality* perceived in ACFODE's *Arise*-magazine's issues during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017?
3. How is improving *gender equality* perceived in ACFODE's *Arise*-magazine's issues during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017?

I am interested to investigate the perceptions of gender equality that can be found in *Arise*-magazine and I see it necessary to first examine how gender is perceived in those materials. This is because it would be difficult or even impossible to properly analyse gender equality without knowing how gender is understood in the data. The third research question arose along the analysis process as I noticed that there were several expressions mentioning the need to improve gender equality and the concrete ways to improve gender equality in Uganda. As the theme of improving gender equality seems to logically continue the themes of the first two research questions, I decided to include the third research question about the perceptions of the ways to improve gender equality in the research.

4.2 Qualitative research

In this thesis I am using qualitative research methods. According to Lichtman (2013), qualitative methods are usually used when the researcher is analysing data that is in non-numerical form, though it is also possible to use non-numerical data with quantitative methods. However, my aim is to study perceptions, and it might be difficult to study perceptions in numeric form. Analysing the text in depth would be challenging by only quantifying the data, for example, by counting how many times a certain word is present on the text. Qualitative methods suit for my research as they allow analysing the possible connections between different themes that appear in the content.

Since I am interested in perceptions, and the theoretical framework of this thesis suggests that gender and gender equality can be considered as socially and culturally constructed issues that vary depending on time and place, I lean on social constructionism. Social constructivism as a philosophical view is connected to social constructionism. According to Metsämuuronen (2011), constructivism as a theoretical orientation differs from other orientations, since it sees the reality as relative, whereas other orientations view reality as realistic. Constructivism sees the reality as relative reality of different people, although parts of the reality may be common with several individuals. The reality is constructed depending on the specific context (Metsämuuronen, 2011). Burr (2015) states that social constructionism does not see our ways of understanding and knowledge as something derived from the nature but constructed through the interactions between people. The concepts of certain issues can be seen as the ways of understanding the world that have been accepted by many people. Thus, knowledge is not a product of objective observation but formed within the social processes and interactions between people (Burr, 2015).

4.3 Qualitative content analysis

Content analysis is a common research method both in qualitative and quantitative research, especially when the data is in textual form (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kondracki, Wellman & Amundson, 2002). Qualitative content analysis is used for searching for meanings in text (Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2018), and making valid and objective inferences about the writer, text itself or audience of the text (Kondracki et al., 2002; Weber, 1990). Qualitative content analysis is a method that is not directly driven by a theory or epistemology, but several theoretical or epistemological viewpoints can be applied with it (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). As I am interested in studying perceptions emerging from the textual data and not leaning on a certain theory or viewpoint at the beginning of the analysis process, I decided to use qualitative content analysis in the research.

Weber (1990) states that the basic idea of content analysis is separating parts of the data into fewer categories. The parts of data may be different units of text, such as phrases or words (Kondracki et al., 2002). However, there are several approaches within content analysis, and the theoretical and substantive interests of the researcher and the research problem impacts on what kind of approach is used (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990). While Weber (1990), Mayring (2000) and Kondracki et al. (2002) use the concepts of *inductive* and *deductive approaches*, Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) talk about three approaches: *theory-based*, *data-based* and *theory-directed*. Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999), on the other hand, talk about three different roles of the theory; *deductive*, *inductive* and *no role*. Finally, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) talk about *conventional*, *directed* and *summative content analysis*. According to, for example, Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018), Hsieh and Shannon (2005) and Weber (1990), the main differences between the approaches concern the way that theory is used in the analysis. In inductive, data-based or conventional approach theory does not lead or guide the analysis, whereas in deductive or theory-based approach the analysis is led by theory, and for example the categories of the data are formed with theory as a base. In theory-directed approach, on the other hand, theory acts a guide for the analysis, but do not necessarily pre-determine the categories (e.g. Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018; Weber, 1990). In this thesis I use the data-based approach and thus introduce it in more detail.

The data-based, inductive approach is often used when the aim of the research is to describe a phenomenon (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Theory does not guide the analysis process or forming categories when using an inductive approach (Kondracki et al., 2002; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). Instead, the units of the analysis are chosen from the data regarding to the aim of the research (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018) and the researcher allows “the categories and names for categories to flow from the data” (Hsieh & Shannon 2005, 1279). The researcher aims to make empirical generalizations - and later, theoretical propositions - based on the data, and theory does not come into play until after the data are collected and analysed (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). This approach is often used when there is not very much existing theory or former research about the phenomenon (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), and when it is wanted to gain more basic information about the nature of a certain phenomenon (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). In addition, this approach is ideal for gaining direct information from the research data since there are not predetermined categories or theoretical perspectives – therefore, the knowledge that follow the analysis is based on the data and contextual and unique viewpoints of the research data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

However, the analysis based only on data brings challenges and is sometimes considered even impossible. For example, Ruusuvuori, Nikander and Hyvärinen (2010) and Salo (2015) claim that it is

quite impossible to analyse the data without any preconceptions that impact on the choices of the researcher. Also, Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) mention that the research methods chosen by the researcher already affect the research results and thus there cannot be “pure” observations of the data. Besides, the researcher is not necessarily able to control whether the analysis is based on the data or her own assumptions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). However, I will reflect the decision concerning the analysis process as well as forming of the categorisation. Even though I had prior knowledge about the issue, I tried to create the categories as data-based as possible. As I am interested to examine the perceptions of gender, gender equality and ways to improve gender equality that emerge specifically from ACFODE’s materials, I did not want to have too strict preconceptions leading the analysis process. Therefore, I decided to do the analysis as data-based as possible and use theory as a very loose framework when discussing the findings. For example, categorization might have been easier if it was based on prior research or theory, but since there are smaller probability for something in the data being left unnoticed when not using any ready-made theory-based categorization, I wanted to form the categories based on the data.

There has been quite much critique towards the qualitative content analysis. For example, Salo (2015) claims that qualitative content analysis is often used only because it offers an “easy” choice for the researcher since the categorization has been seen as replacing the researcher’s own thinking and theoretical deductions. However, as the aim of qualitative research is to find something new and something that has not been realised before (Salo, 2015), only categorizing and listing the data is not enough for a successful analysis and only rearranging the data cannot be considered as proper results. Töttö (2000) agrees that the theory does not emerge from the data only by browsing it but by researcher’s own work and discovering theory from the data. It is thus important to reflect what kind of choices the researched does. The researcher should not be afraid of interpreting the data herself (Salo, 2015). I take the critique into attention and aim to do deeper analysis and go beyond only categorizing the data. In the section 5 Results, I will not end my analysis process in presenting the categories but analyse the results deeper, for example, I analyse what kind of connections the different findings possibly have with each other.

4.4 Research data

I collected the data from Arise-magazine which is a magazine published by ACFODE. There were totally 7 issues of Arise available on ACFODE’s website at the beginning of my research process. The available issues were published between the years 2013 and 2017, although issues 58 and 59

were missing. Year 2015 is thus excluded from the analysis, and the perceptions that emerge during years 2013-2014 and 2016-2017 in Arise are included in the analysis. As the website of ACFODE is currently down, I could not ensure how often or how long Arise has been published for now.

Each issue of Arise consists of several parts which include articles written by ACFODE's members and featuring journalists. There also are interviews, letters to editor, question & answer -parts, jokes, feedback, book reviews, profiles of inspiring or successful women and men as well as case examples and stories from different organizations, companies and individuals. A few Arise issues have articles named Street talk which include interviews of Ugandan citizens. Arise also includes lots of visual material, for instance pictures with texts such as aphorisms or slogans.

Since each issue is approximately 40-60 pages long and I found totally seven issues of the magazine, it seemed inevitable to drop something out of the analysis. After browsing through every issue, I decided to make the first limiting by including one issue per year in the analysis, as there were two issues from the years 2014, 2016 and 2017 and only one from year 2013. Each Arise issue has a main theme, and these are the themes that were addressed in the available issues. The issues chosen to the analysis are in bold text:

- **Issue 55, published in October 2013: *Endangered gender women and health***
- **Issue 56, published in July 2014: *Empowering women through education***
- Issue 57, published in December 2014: *Femininity at work: the experiences of women in male dominated occupations*
- Issues 58-59 missing
- **Issue 60, published in June 2016: *Politics of gender equality: the role of men and boys in promoting women and girls rights***
- Issue 61, published in November 2016: *Exclusion, misrepresentation & discrimination – insights on the situation of women in the media*
- Issue 62, published in June 2017: *Religion, gender & women's rights*
- **Issue 63, published in December 2017: *Inclusion & exclusion: women's movement building***

I included issues 55, 56, 60 and 63 in the analysis. My decision to include these issues was based on my first notions while browsing through all the seven issues. As I had decided to include only one issue per year, the issues 55, 56, 60 and 63 seemed to best relate to my research questions. The issue 57 which was left out from analysis mainly focuses on women in male-dominated occupations, and

issue 56 from the same year with the theme of empowering women through education seemed to be more general regarding my research question. Issue 61 was excluded as it focuses on women's media image whereas issue 60 with the theme of politics is more general theme regarding my research question. The issue 62 was excluded as its main focus is on viewpoint of religion, whereas the issue 63 includes more texts about gender relations and how women's movement has faced the issues concerning gender equality and thus, relates better to my research questions - even though women's movement is not the main focus of my thesis.

Next, I decided to do some limiting inside each issue. In order to have a systematic policy regarding each issue, I decided to leave the following parts out of analysis; *Letters to the editor*, *Book reviews*, *Question & answer*, *Featuring interviews*, *Interviews*, *Profiles*, *Jokes*, *Success stories* and *Case examples*. Although the success stories and case examples were left out, some of the texts included in the analysis contain viewpoints or opinions of individuals, organizations or companies. Exceptionally, I decided to include the parts of *Street talks* as they offer information about citizens' views. Thus, the data contains not only ACFODE's view but also individual perceptions.

After the limitations, I collected the data into a Word document that eventually was 72 pages long (Times New Roman, font size 11). Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) mention that if the researcher wants to analyse heterogeneously, a big amount of data is reasonable. Especially when the analysis is based on data, there should be a relatively big number of information providers to get a wide and versatile picture of the phenomenon by categorizing (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). In addition, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) mention that since the aim of data-based analysis is to gain knowledge about contextual viewpoints of the research data, the amount of information providers should be extensive. Since I am more interested in finding whether there are different perceptions instead of similar ones, it is good to have quite a wide data that includes as many viewpoints of the issue as possible. Thus, the broad amount of data seemed suitable for my analysis.

4.5 Analysis process

The process of choosing the analysis method for my thesis included lots of consideration. My initial plan was to use discourse analysis as the analysis method. However, after trying several times to combine the research questions and the method of discourse analysis, I realised that the qualitative content analysis was more suitable method for the aims of this research. This is because my main research interest is in studying the content of the text, not the language use itself. Qualitative content analysis, on the other hand focuses on the content and examines the communication behaviour of the communicators that have been chosen to the research (Budd, Thorp & Donohew, 1967).

I use the qualitative content analysis that is mostly based on the research data and I lean on a model that Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) has presented. Their model of data-based qualitative content analysis is further based on Miles and Huberman's (1994) model of data-based qualitative analysis. According to this model, the process of analysis includes mainly three phases; 1. reducing the data, 2. clustering the data and 3. abstracting the data. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) mention that it can be difficult for the researcher to stick onto one thing that she is searching for in the data, but it is necessary to do that in order to make a proper analysis. I can subscribe their statement as I wanted to include every interesting piece of the data into my analysis and final report. However, following Tuomi and Sarajärvi's (2018) advice, I proceeded to read the data keeping in mind only my research questions. This advice helped me to leave out of the analysis issues that were not crucial for my research.

My analysis process began by adding the data into a Word document. Next, as Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) suggest, I started reducing the data. Because my data was relatively big, I saw it useful to first read the data properly and mark the relevant parts with colour and simultaneously leave irrelevant sections out of the analysis. The relevant parts included expressions that were related to my first research question, *perceptions of gender*. They consisted of expressions that somehow describe gender, gender roles or gender relations. Second, I included expressions related to my second research question, *perceptions of gender equality*. Here I included expressions that mentioned, for example, gender equality, gender equity and gender disparity. Since there seemed to be quite many expressions connecting gender equality with women's rights, I also decided to include the expressions mentioning women's rights or women empowerment. Third, I included expressions that were related to *improving gender equality*. Analysing the data

without theory-based preconceptions was somewhat challenging but also very rewarding, as it enabled me to find expressions that might have been ignored if a strict theory-based analysis was being used.

Next, according to the model that Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) present, I began condensing the expressions that had been separated from the data. I coded the original expressions with numbers according to their issue and article number so that it is easier to follow later from which article and issue the quotation was taken. The parts of Street talks were also coded with the number of the statement. I added the relevant expressions of the data onto a table and began transforming the original data into condensed expressions. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) also mention that one original expression can include several condensed expressions, which I noticed while condensing my data. There is an example of making the condensed expressions on Table 1.

Original expression	Condensed expression
At the same time, however, there seems to be much more confusion concerning how exactly men and women can work well together. Society has for a long time believed that men and women are gifted differently and thus ought to maintain specific roles and responsibilities in society. Some extremists have gone to the extent of asserting that the differences between men and women are so great that it is virtually impossible to understand each other, let alone work well together. Thus a wedge has been driven between the sexes, pitting us one against the other, locked in perpetual competition that has developed a pattern of dominance; if either a man or woman is in leadership, the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is pondered how it is possible for men and women to work well together - It has been believed long time in the society that men and women have different gifts and should have specific roles and responsibilities in society - Some people even think that the differences between women and men are so great that it is impossible to understand each other and work together - Due to these perceptions, there has been a wedge between the sexes which has led to competition and a pattern of dominance; if a man is in leadership, woman cannot be a partner but a follower in order to reach successful results (and vice versa)

other may not be a partner, but instead a follower in order for a successful result to ensue. 60,11	
What I find rather interesting (or is it!) is that even in institutions that are not necessarily for women only, there is a growing tendency of women getting the jobs much more easily than their male counterparts. The difference, though, is that in many instances, the women are favoured squarely both for reasons to do with suitability for the job and, in cases where the employers are males, other non-job-related reasons may come into play. In both instances, the women are still justifiably seen to face discrepancies in pay and the work environment in comparison with their male counterparts. 60,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - male counterparts - it is a trend in some institutions that a woman gets the job easier than a man - Women may be favoured squarely for reasons to do with suitability for the job but also other non-job-related reasons may come into play if the employers are males - Women are still seen to face discrepancies in pay and the work environment compared to their male counterparts
You are no longer alone: For years, men have held women in isolation to control them. 55, 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Men have controlled women - Women are no longer alone
Both men and women say that women's purpose in marriage is to produce children. 55, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - both men and women - agreement of the purpose of the marriage
- - grand efforts made by men and women across the country who have trained and equipped young men and women from primary school to university in their roles, responsibilities and rights as citizens of Uganda. As a result of this, a crop of young people with knowledge of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efforts have been made to train younger generation about their roles, responsibilities and rights as Ugandan citizens - Young generation of Uganda is aware of the evils of discrimination and tries to correct the evils of gender inequality

the evils of discrimination is budding, marked by youthful exuberance and talent, with a passion for the correction of all evils brought about by gender inequality and ushering the nation into a new era of hope for the realisation of justice for all in every sphere. 60,6	
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Table 1: Example of condensing the expressions

Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) suggest that the condensed expressions can be listed on a paper and later clustered into categories. After transforming the relevant data into condensed expressions, I listed the condensed expressions one below another into a new Word document and started to use different colour fonts to separate the expressions with the same or different meanings. Also, some of the expressions included different meanings hence I used several colours with one expression. The example of colour codes can be seen on Table 2.

Colour code	Condensed expression
The relations between men and women	- Men sometimes do not listen to woman if she does not want to have sex because of menstrual cramps 55,8
The current situation of women The ways to improve women's situation	- Young women should not be mistreated at work because of natural menstruation 55, 8
The ways to improve women's situation Challenges of improving gender equality The current situation of women	- Women should feel safe and respected but it seems far-fetched in Uganda 55, 8
Challenges of improving gender equality	- There are not enough gender sensitive policies concerning women's sexual and reproductive health rights 55, 9
The current situation of women	- In many places of the world women still are denied certain rights (as right to own land, inherit property, obtain access to credit, attend school, earn income and progress in their progression free from job discrimination) 56, 1

The relations between men and women	- Women are highly dependent on men on financial assistance which hinders women from seeking leadership positions as the procedure usually requires financial knowledge 60,6
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Table 2: Example of colour highlighting

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018), the next phase after reducing is clustering the data. In the phase of clustering, the expressions are read again, and similarities and differences are searched for. Expressions with the same meaning are clustered into one sub-category which is named based on its content. In this phase, the base for the structure of the research is created. If the categorization will be based on the data, there is no pre-knowledge about how many or what kind of categories there will be. However, it is not reasonable to form dozens of categories since the categorization is meant to condense the data (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). Nevertheless, since the data of my research are quite wide, I saw it necessary to form many small and detailed categories at first and then combine them into a smaller number of wider categories.

After using different colour fonts to mark the similar and different expressions, I started to cluster the expressions and ended up in several sub-categories. After that, the sub-categories can be combined into upper categories and finally the upper categories can be combined in order to form the main categories (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). By combining the sub-categories I made a few upper categories, and eventually the main categories were formed by combining the upper categories. At every step of the analysis I had the research questions on my mind but still tried to form the categories as data-based as possible. The phases of the analysis process also blended with each other. I decided to include categories that contain expressions from only one article, since my aim is not knowing how many times one expression occurs but gaining as wide understanding of the issue as possible. The forming of upper categories, combined categories and finally main categories can be seen in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Sub-categories	Upper category
There are two sexes There are differences men and women Men and women are seen as counterparts	There are two sexes – male and female
There are differences between the sexes There are differences between men and women	The sexes differ from each other
Women are capable There are successful women Women are important for the whole society Men are not ahead of females and women are respected	Women are capable and meaningful for the society

Consensus of wife and husband Both are dependent on each other	Men and women can be effective together and need each other
Girls' and women's education is important for the country Girls' education is as important for the country as boys' education	Girls' education is important for the country
Women are the "weaker" sex/gender Men and boys are more appreciated than girls and women Women should not be seen as inferior to men anymore Women are dependent on men Woman cannot perform same tasks as man Males are dominant Men are seen as "evils"/treating women badly Men should change how they see men and women Women should not be seen as inferior to men anymore	Women have been seen as inferior to men
Woman's role is a housewife, mother, care-giver etc. There are traditional roles for women and men Men's role is to provide for woman	The roles of women and men
There are cultural expectations of women There can be problematic consequences from social/cultural expectations of women	Cultural expectations for women
Gender inequalities / gender disparities still exist in Uganda There are gender disparities in school There are gender power imbalances between men and women	Gender inequality exists in Uganda
There are gender inequalities towards women in Uganda There are unequal practices towards women in workplaces The situation of Ugandan women needs enhancing Women's and girls' issues need redress There are problematic practices concerning women Problematic issues concerning women appear especially in rural areas There are unequal practices towards women in workplaces Women of Uganda face challenges Girls drop out from school, don't learn effectively or don't remain in school There is violence/harassment against women There can be problematic consequences from challenges that women face/violence against women Women face disrespect/mistreatment There are weak services provided for women Women's participation in political sphere needs addressing	Gender inequalities concern especially women

There has been fighting for gender equality for women by using programmes that promote women's equality	
Woman is not equal to man Equality between women and men Equal opportunities for men and women are important	Gender equality is about men and women being equal with each other
Sex shouldn't matter how people are treated Both women and men should be appreciated and included	Everyone should be appreciated, no matter of the sex
Equality for women has been fought for There is legislation that supports women's rights/gender equality There have been efforts to fight for women's rights and participation (and thus for reaching gender equality) Women's and girls' issues importance is recognized in national educational policy	There have been efforts to fight for gender equality
The idea of gender equality is appreciated There has been slow progress towards equality There have been accomplishments regarding gender equality but still much needs to be done Women have been empowered Progress has been made regarding girls' education Women are more noticed in political sphere Society is more aware of women's challenges Much remains to be done in order to achieve gender equality	There has been progress regarding the situation of gender equality, but still much remains to be done
Women should be empowered Women empowerment and respecting girls should begin in childhood Girls and women should be empowered to participate Women should be empowered at the workplaces and gender equality promoted	Empowering women is important
Affirmative action has put women in the weaker position Affirmative action is problematic Media show women in a bad spot even though it's thought women are independent and bold	There have been efforts meant to make women's position better but ended up worsening the situation
The aim of promoting gender equality The importance of gender equality should be realised In order to participate, women need skills that can be taught in education Women's access to family planning is important in order to give women better position Women should be better taken into account in workplaces (Women's and girls') education should be developed Women's own voice/activity is important	What should be done to improve gender equality

<p>Uganda's women's movement is important for addressing women's issues</p> <p>Men have a big role in improving the situation of women/gender equality</p> <p>Affirmative action is useful for gender equality</p> <p>Collective action is important</p> <p>There can be actions made in school to decrease harassment of female students</p> <p>What should be done to improve women's position and gender equality</p> <p>Policies/legislation is needed</p> <p>Home is important in reaching gender equality</p>	
<p>Empowering women can bring challenges</p> <p>There is imbalance in advancing the rights of women</p> <p>Family planning undermines culture and tradition</p> <p>There is lack of knowledge</p> <p>There is suspicion about the "real" progress of women</p> <p>Some people can feel that women's movement/women empowerment is threatening</p> <p>There is difference between the legislation and real life</p>	The challenges that may appear while pursuing for gender equality / women's rights
<p>Religious factors can impact on how gender equality is experienced</p> <p>Cultural factors can impact on how gender equality is experienced</p>	The impacts of religion and culture

Table 3: Combining sub-categories to form upper categories

Upper categories	Combined category
<p>There are two sexes</p> <p>The sexes differ from each other</p>	There are two sexes that differ from each other
<p>Men and women can be effective together and need each other</p> <p>Women have been seen as inferior to men</p> <p>Women are capable and meaningful for the society</p> <p>Girls' education is important for the country</p> <p>The roles of women and men</p>	The roles and positions of women and men
Gender inequality exists in Uganda	Gender inequality exist in Uganda
<p>Empowering women is important</p> <p>Gender inequalities concern especially women</p>	Gender inequalities concern especially women
<p>Everyone should be appreciated, no matter of the sex</p> <p>Gender equality is about men and women being equal to each other</p>	Gender equality is about men and women being equal
<p>There have been efforts to fight for gender equality</p> <p>There has been progress regarding the situation of gender equality, but still much remains to be done</p>	<p>Progress has been made in order to reach gender equality</p> <p>Still much needs to be done</p>

There have been efforts meant to make women's position better but ended up making the situation worse The challenges that may appear while pursuing for gender equality/women's rights	There are many challenges connected to achieving gender equality
What should be done to improve gender equality The impacts of religion and culture	What should be taken into account when reaching for gender equality

Table 4: Combining upper categories to form combining categories

Combined category	Main category
There are two sexes that differ from each other The roles and positions of women and men	Perceptions of gender
Gender inequality exists in Uganda Gender inequalities concern especially women Gender equality is about men and women being equal Progress has been made in order to reach gender equality Still much needs to be done	Perceptions of the situation of gender equality
There are many challenges connected to achieving gender equality What should be taken into account when reaching for gender equality	Perceptions of the ways to improve gender equality

Table 5: Forming the main categories

Finally, the data are abstracted which means that the meaningful information from the viewpoint of the research is separated. Based on this, the theoretical concepts can be formed. The researched can combine the categories and continue abstracting as long as it is possible regarding to the data (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). I will introduce the deeper analysis of the results in chapter 5, Results.

5 RESULTS

In this chapter I present the further analysis of the results of the research. I have worked inductively, thus the analysis goes beyond the observations and categorizing, as for example Salo (2015), Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) and Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999) have suggested. For example, I have analysed possible connections between the perceptions of gender, gender equality and improving gender equality. The categories that can be seen in chapter 4.5 are used as a basic structure for the results, however the headings of the chapters slightly differ from the category names that are presented in chapter 4.5. It seemed necessary to modify the headings in order to clearly present the most relevant findings concerning the research questions. I will present data quotations in each chapter as well as analyse these quotations. Some of the quotations are presented as a whole, separated from the text, and some of the quotations are introduced within the text.

5.1 Perceptions of gender in *Arise*

In this chapter, I present the results concerning the perception of gender in *Arise*-magazine. There are expressions such as “men”, “women”, “female”, “male”, “daughter”, “son”, “wife”, “husband”, “father”, “mother”, “all genders”, “two sexes”, “both sexes”, “girls” and “boys” in the data used when talking about genders, gender roles and relations.

5.1.1 Two sexes

The movement promoted the equality of rights and opportunities for both sexes. 63, 4

Recalling the example above regarding how men and women perceive their sexual involvement should help us not to view men as aggressors (even when they mostly are), but rather to understand the differences between the two sexes. 63,5

The results show that there is a strong perception of division people into two sexes in the data. There are several mentions about *both sexes* and *two sexes*.

- - Similarly, both women and men should enjoy the world's opportunities in equal measure as long as one possesses the qualification it takes to perform a given responsibility. 60, 4

Both men and women say that women's purpose in marriage is to produce children. 55, 5

The journey to this has been heightened with a lot of capacity-building and information sharing, which all culminated in an unwavering resolve to garner as much support as possible for equity and equality for all genders represented in the citizenry of the nation. 60, 8

Several expressions in the data imply that that these two sexes are male and female. There is no mention about other sexes or genders, such as transgender – however, one quotation mentions *all genders represented in the citizenry of the nation*.

5.1.2 Confrontation between men and women

In living a life like this, we have comfortably grounded a foundation for our daughters to appreciate their ability as they grow up, and not to be bulldozed by their male counterparts. 60, 10

Thus a wedge has been driven between the sexes, pitting us one against the other, locked in perpetual competition that has developed a pattern of dominance; if either a man or woman is in leadership, the other may not be a partner, but instead a follower in order for a successful result to ensue. 60, 11

In places, there is a strong confrontation between men and women in the data. A few expressions mention that male and female are *counterparts*.

It is also known that women dedicate more of their time to housework than men; they have less access to property ownership, and are the more affected sex in terms of education due to cultural influence. 56, 9

In Uganda, women and girls still do not have the same opportunities as men and boys. 60, 1

The confrontation between men and women continue when talking about the roles and positions of men and women. There also are differences mentioned in the way men and women and their roles are seen.

5.1.3 Men and women as fundamentally different

The key proponents of unbalanced societal politics presume that there are fundamental differences in the way women and men think and behave. 'Men compete, women converse'; 'men think sequentially, women think in a more random way.' 60, 11

The expressions in the data include several perceptions about men and women being different. The texts in Arise indicate that it is a cultural belief that men and women are fundamentally different. It is claimed that “It is also known that women dedicate more of their time to housework than men - - it appears that a greater percentage of women’s income is spent on child goods more than men’s” (56, 9). Arise’s texts seem to acknowledge the differences but also questions whether women and men are “truly so different” (60, 11).

The differences are approached from both biological as well as social and cultural perspectives. There are perceived to be differences in men’s and women’s biology and ‘natural’ straits as well as how they usually behave socially or culturally. For instance, quotations from 63, 5 indicate strong differences in the sexual behaviour of men and women: “when a man cheats on his wife, it does not necessarily mean that he doesn’t love her” because “men are easily turned on and the sex drive comes so quickly in their minds”, whereas when woman cheats on her husband, “she has fully emotionally disassociated herself from her husband”. The differences between men and women can be seen so strong that they impact on the relationships within a family: “Women, on the other hand, culturally do not commit to more than one man and generally do not approve of their men relating with other women - which is a source of family feuds” (63, 5). It is also considered “how men and women can work well together” (60, 11) since “society has for a long time believed that men and women are gifted differently and thus ought to maintain specific roles and responsibilities in society - - Some extremists have gone to the extent of asserting that the differences between men and women are so great that it is virtually impossible to understand each other, let alone work well together” (60, 11).

At some jobs, women are not believed to “perform as efficiently as men because women are physically weak yet these jobs require a lot of energy” (63, 7, 3), which indicates inevitable physiological differences between women and men. There can be seen a lot of confrontation between men and women in the quotations above. It seems that men and women are often seen as opposite and lots of confrontation and differentiation is made between them. The informants in the data talk about men and women considered different within the culture, but also (in places) rebuild this view of men and women as counterparts in which way they use language and talk about men and women.

It is stated that it is important to understand the differences between men and women in order to “appreciate the challenges facing the women’s movement today in the effort to address

women's problems" (63,5). In order to effectively address women's issues and offer better services for them, it is important to notice that "the interests and needs of women differ from those of men" (60, 13) and "implemented programmes have to be monitored and at all these stages, women have to be in the processes", indicating that women themselves are the experts in promoting their own issues. Thus, it appears to be important to notice that there are fundamental differences between the behaviour, interests and needs of men and women. The texts in Arise also question the cultural perception of men and women being fundamentally different since these perceptions may prevent achieving "absolute 'sanity' - - in favour of women" (63, 5). It is thus perceived that the usual perception of a woman dedicating herself for only one man and a man, on the other hand, having a biological "insatiable sexual appetite" (63, 5) and having more partners, puts woman in an unequal position since men having more than one partner is thought to be more accepted in the culture.

It is also thought whether the gender differences or specific traits are created by biology or socialization: "If men's character is not something they are socialised into, how, then, can we talk them out of it? The same applies to issues of men controlling family land and property at the expense of women and taking women as property at the time of marriage. While some of these things are explained by cultural practices, could some be generally as a result of inborn human character?" (63, 5). If the traits are dependent on biology, there is an assumption that it would be difficult to change them.

5.1.4 Women as weak and caregivers, men as dominant decision-makers

We are forced to believe society is and will continue to be a patriarchal one where there are separate roles for men and women. - - I remember when I announced plans to stand for Mukono municipality Member of Parliament (MP), there were voices that I should instead go for district woman MP, implying I would not win a directly elected MP seat because I am a woman. I, however, stood firm and went on to win. 60, 7, 11

Those who may be willing to take up leadership positions have been impoverished by the cultural wing of society that believes that women are only meant to do production, whereas the management of the finances is left to the men who deny women access to and budgeting of the money. The over-dependence of women on men for financial assistance hinders women from seeking leadership positions since the procedure usually requires robust financial muscle. 60, 6

It is perceived that there is a strong distinction between the expectations, roles and responsibilities of men and women in the Ugandan culture. This seems to be because there is a long-standing belief in the society that women and men are different and “gifted differently” (60, 11) and people are “forced to believe society is and will continue to be a patriarchal one where there are separate roles for men and women” (60, 7, 11). In general, men are often viewed as dominant who have decision-making power in the household as well as financial knowledge in working life. On the contrary, women are mainly perceived as working at home and taking care of the household (though not financially): “In homes, many women are still viewed as kitchen wives who are incapable of even managing the financial resources of the home” (60, 6). The roles are so strong that sometimes woman is “fearing what people would say on seeing the husband doing all the housework” (60, 10). The responsibility of gaining income is usually men’s, and women are not usually even perceived to be capable to gain income or work outside the household and family. 60, 10 claims that “traditionally, many ladies are brought up to rely on men, believing that only men can have enough money and only men, therefore, should build homes”. However, some men are claimed to encourage their wives to learn certain roles that are “traditionally reserved for - - a man” (60, 10), to be able to be in full control when the husband is away from home.

There is also disbelief towards women’s capabilities in the political field; “there were voices - - implying I would not win a directly elected MP seat because I am a woman” (60, 7, 11), however it is possible for women too to get elected if she believes in her capabilities, even though it may not be easy due to the cultural beliefs. Besides, a quotation from 63, 2 states that “the way our economy is structured, fewer women are able to compete favourably” and “in Kampala, most market vendors are women, yet men win the tenders to run these markets”. This indicates that while women work at the lower level, the jobs at higher, decision-making level are usually occupied with men.

However, the view of women and men seems to vary depending on who is it asked from; ACFODE or women’s activists seem to view it necessary to change the views of women being just mothers and ‘kitchen wives’: “- - negative cultural perceptions about women as managers, tagged to their traditional gender roles as mothers, must be reversed” (60, 13), while their texts show that the general cultural view is still that women are often perceived as caregivers that mostly spend their time at home taking care of children. Seeing women only through their traditional role of nurturers and ‘kitchen wives’ and especially real-life consequences originating from these views receives critique in ACFODE’s text (or example seeing women as incapable

of even managing the financial resources of the home and thus not capable of being a managers).

Many parts of the text express the lower bargaining power of women compared to men, for example in household or relationships. In addition, males are considered dominant in many areas, including political field, work and household. In 56, 7, men are described as having “a sense of entitlement and superiority, while many women lack self-esteem or believe that they cannot accomplish much”, and “nowhere does this mentality come out more strongly than in the educational system” (56, 7). Several expressions claim that men have been dominant or even controlled women over time: “You are no longer alone: For years, men have held women in isolation to control them” (55, 6). Women are also perceived to be limited in many parts of life compared to men. It is claimed stated that “in terms of freedom to exploit their potential, women and girls are limited as well” (56, 9). Ugandan women and girls are also claimed still not to “have the same opportunities as men and boys” (60, 1). According to quotation from 55, 9, “recent research shows that due to patriarchy, more and more women are forced into risky sexual encounters due to a low bargaining power in relationships”. In addition, in 63, 5 it is perceived that men tend to control the “family land and property at the expense of women” and take “women as property at the time of marriage”. In 55, 5 it is stated that “women talked about lack of power in decision making as a key obstacle to [contraceptive] use”.

Yes, despite all efforts invested towards women's emancipation, it's clearly evident that majority of women particularly in rural areas still remain largely vulnerable to male chauvinism. Women carry the largest burden in the home in terms of child upbringing, yet they are most times the lowest earning. This situation renders them extremely vulnerable when their husbands, the main bread winners cease to exist. However, if well protected by the law, such women would have the freedom to more ably make decisions over their lives without forced interferences from their in-laws. 55, 10

In many places of the data it is seen that particularly men have problematic views about women: “ – the males in our society still harbour unbalanced views of the roles of women and men” (60, 9). Men “should stop looking at women as subordinates but rather equals - this can help talent development and prosperity” (60, 7, 13). The “top jobs are still occupied by men owing stereotypes about women” (60, 6). It is claimed that “over time, some men have treated women as second class citizens” (60, 7, 11) and that “male politicians haven't been fully engaged in this thriving venture, despite the fact that they are the custodians of the patriarchal system that women are forced to survive under” (60, 8). Even though there have been efforts to promote

gender equality and enhance the situation of women, especially women of rural areas still seem to be seen as subordinates to men or even “largely vulnerable to male chauvinism” (55, 10).

At some points, men are even seen as ‘evils’ that control the patriarchal system in which women are forced to survive. Sometimes women’s movement accuse men for being the oppressors, and the message of the movement may be even frustrated: “You can defeat oppression - - Corruption and oppression relies on the silencing of women, but it is women who can expose it all. The individual oppressor is always a coward that relies on the silence of the victim and fears the awareness of the masses” (55, 6). However, it is emphasized that there are many men fighting for women’s rights: “It portrays how men and boys have been engaged as gender advocates to speak out as active agents and stakeholders who can transform social norms, behaviour and gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination, inequality and rights violation, especially against women and girls” (60, 1). It is mentioned that women themselves should raise up and fight for their rights and use their voices too. The use of language may maintain confrontation and distinction between men and women as well as the view that women are victims and men oppressors: “Recalling the example above regarding how men and women perceive their sexual involvement should help us not to view men as aggressors (even when they mostly are), but rather to understand the differences between the two sexes” (63, 5). This quotation first claims that men should not be seen as aggressors, but then agree that they usually mostly are aggressors, and therefore seems maintain the perception of men as aggressors.

These entrenched assumptions about girls’ roles as care givers, mothers, brides and household laborers influence perceptions of the value of girls’ education and the life and career choices that are available for them. Changing them is another big and complex challenge for the women’s movement, even in areas where there is a generally positive response to girls’ education. 56, 3

The expectations and assumptions towards women as mothers and caregivers may limit their education and career choices. If women are thought to be only suitable for caregiving and being a mother, it may cause negative perceptions about women’s ability to be a manager. Assuming women as only mothers may make people think that education is unnecessary for women. In addition, there may be obstacles created by “religious beliefs, such as Catholicism, which tend to cripple couples’ resolve to live less risky lives” (55, 9) and “women in such imbalanced relationships are often unable to negotiate condom use, or even discuss the possibility of safe sex practices with their partner” (55, 9). Thus, religious beliefs may prevent the use of contraception or negating about it, which may expose women “into risk of infection with HIV” (55,

9). And, since it is often considered appropriate for men to have many partners, women “are not in a position to hold their partner responsible for possible infidelity” (55, 9). It is stated that “only a patriarchal culture, which exalts men as absolutely dominant over women can promote an environment where HIV/AIDS is easily spread from one partner to another” (55, 9).

Besides, the death of the husband may have serious consequences for the woman in the family since, according to 55, 10, they are “most times the lowest earning” in the household, and “when their husbands, the main bread winners cease to exist”, women may not have any income or ownership. In this situation, the practice of widow inheritance may take place; for example, the brother-in-law will inherit the widow and continue to make the decisions for the woman. However, it is stated that women could be more protected in the case of husband’s death if there were even more accurate legislation concerning for example women’s decision making, which can also be considered as a way to enhance gender equality.

In some places of the texts, there is an assumption about women as ‘victims’ – as for example quotation from 60, 4 states that “gender disparities being often unintentionally skewed to disadvantage women – just because they are women!”. This may tell about the long-lasting inferior position of women compared to men, and therefore women may sometimes take the place of a victim. In 55, 1 the view of women as victims at the moment is supported: “- - you shall begin to understand the societal frameworks within which change needs to be created in order to uplift women out of the ‘victim’ corner onto an even plane of development alongside their male counterparts”.

It is very important for girls to have the same (or, logically, even greater) access to education as boys. Women fend for the family in both good times and in bad. They are often responsible for the economic wellbeing of their families and for primary health care. A woman is a manager and key decision-maker of the home. She, thus, needs all the skills necessary to make a successful and happy “home enterprise”. A household with an educated woman is far better off compared to one with an uneducated wife and mother. 56, 7

In the order of things, if the woman is the one in control, the man should not be threatened because of the woman’s power, lived in its value as the feminine, as the nurturing, as the mother power, it should not be terrifying to the man.” 63, 3

However, Arise aims at uplifting women out of being victims. There is a mention of woman as a ‘key decision-maker’ and ‘manager’ of the home. That rebuilds the image of women as capable of managing household. After all, Arise somewhat rebuilds the view of women as mothers

and nurturers too, since there is an expression that also claims women's power as feminine, nurturing, mother power that "should not be terrifying to the man" (63, 3), even though Arise mostly seems to be eager to change women's position from not only "kitchen wives" that depend on men to independent decision-makers that are capable of working and gaining income. It is also stated that women "should feel safe and respected in regard to this, but that still seems far-fetched in Uganda" (55, 8).

[the citizen] noted that her husband believes in having many children since this is what makes him a real man. She adds that her husband threatened to get another wife if she uses contraceptives. She notes that at first she obeyed but on giving it thorough thought, she decided to silently use contraceptives. 55, 4

There are several cultural expectations towards both women and men. Sometimes it is believed that many children make a man real man, and thus men may refuse to use contraception. According to 55, 5, men may see women as "are weak and easily influenced to have unprotected sex", whereas "females reckon that men want more children and manipulate women into sexual relations without contraceptives exposing women to HIV/AIDS". On the other hand, "unprotected sex for men enhances their reputation among other young men in contrast to the situation for women" (55, 5). There is a perception of men denying "the pregnancy and blame the woman for becoming pregnant" (55, 5). The confrontation between women and men continues here. It even seems that both men and women have unfounded expectations towards each other, and they may be due misconception or culture. It appears that both men and women have specific beliefs and expectations towards the genders and their roles, both themselves as well as their partners: "The men have the perception that they are supposed to be the providers and the women fall prey and willingly yield to this power. They want to depend on men for provision" (63, 3). However, sometimes contraception may not be used out of both woman's and man's fear of side effects, which indicates the lack of knowledge regarding contraception. Besides, sometimes "early pregnancy is perceived as a positive incentive for early marriage" (55, 5) and thus not as a problem.

-- Especially in Africa, where women are expected to look on in silence while their men run wild with multiple sexual partners, the risk of [HIV/AIDS] infection is on the rise. As a cultural belief, this error is carried through generations as more boys turn into men with the exact same mindset of multiple sexual partners, without reason or even at least, caution. It is left to one's imagination how women hope to defend themselves from such dire straits, considering that the challenge of

pleasing their families completely stands in the way of them seeking the much needed redress that is deserving of such a scenario. 55, 9

Social and cultural expectation may have actual causes on people's lives, and they may affect the lives of men and women differently. Culture is seen to impact on the inequalities and problematic practices that especially women face. For example, on the quotation above, having multiple sexual partners is more accepted for men, whereas "women are expected to look on in silence while their men run wild with multiple sexual partners" (55, 9). This practice even exposes women to risk of HIV or AIDS infection. The impact of culture seems to be strong; the woman may not be brave enough to search for help since they usually want to please their families – thus, it may be impossible to seek justice in this kind of situations and protect themselves from the impact of husbands' multiple sex partners.

It is claimed that "Ugandan societies' expectations of young women derail them significantly from controlling their reproductive lives" (55, 11), such as how many children they will have and when. Motherhood appears to be highly appreciated in the Ugandan society, and "women are generally valued more, treated with more respect in their families and communities, and face less risk of being abandoned if they have a large number of children" (55, 11). The expectations may "prevent young women from acknowledging and expressing a desire to limit and space births" (55, 11). On the other hand, if the women acknowledge their right to control their reproductive lives, the social norms may still prevent them for doing that, for example due to fear about what other people may say. It may be difficult for women to find "the right clinic or village health worker that distributes the appropriate family planning methods or, when needed, provides safe abortion services" (55, 11) and "their in-laws or husbands may prevent their efforts to delay or avoid a pregnancy or seek an abortion. Their culture may demand that no man other than their husband sees them naked, but the only health care provider they can find is male" (55, 11). Thus, it appears to be challenging for women to control their reproductive lives sometimes. Also, woman should not complain about the pain when having sex while menstruation since "a woman should never complain about such things because it is a secret thing and a woman has to bear it like a woman" (55, 8).

Impact of the western culture is considered in Arise: "Looking back in the past, society has been unfair to women in making statements by renowned western philosophers and thinkers whether religious or secular. They make statements that downgrade women. - - Unfortunately we have totally erased who we are from the past that we accept these definitions of what a

woman is as it has been given to us from the western perspective” (63, 6). It is stated that “African culture didn’t downgrade women. Yes, the women did their things and the men did theirs but they were all appreciated. Society was really egalitarian and everyone had what to do and they were respected and valued” (63, 3), which implies that the traditional, separate roles were accepted and not seen as problematic before the impact of the west.

I also met with women in the community, most of whom were survivors of FGM [female genital mutilation]. Their greatest issues were the repercussions of FGM during childbirth, which were over-bleeding, delayed recovery from pregnancy and a high risk of death from infections. Others were concerned that their husbands refused to let them use contraceptive methods, thus exposing them to great risk. When I met with the men, I realised that they simply didn’t know how the family planning methods worked and were governed by mythical stories about them when they denied their wives the chance of using them. 60, 6

Girls often have very limited access to reproductive health information and thus cannot make educated decisions regarding their health needs. And even if young women are aware of the options for preventing or ending unintended pregnancies, they may not use these out of fear of side effects, social stigma, or disapproval from others, including those who may characterize them as shirking an imposed social responsibility to become mothers. 55, 11

However, it is acknowledged that the expectations can be due to cultural beliefs and lack of knowledge, not from the desire to treat women badly. Lack of knowledge comes to play also when discussing about reproductive health; women or girls may not know about reproductive health services and may be afraid to control their reproductive lives.

Even when faced with a decision to either send their sons or daughters to school, most parents will choose the sons. This is because they believe that it is much more reasonable to send a male child to school, with the assumption that, “even if a female child goes to school, she will get married, have kids, and work in the kitchen.” Thus, parents believe that an educated son is able to provide for his family, but an educated daughter just becomes a mother and wife, regardless of her schooling. Sadly, this is also supported by people in many communities since they too do not see the importance of female education. 56, 3

The valuation of boys over girls is visible in the text. Sometimes it is thought that girls do not need education since they “an educated son is able to provide for his family, but an educated daughter just becomes a mother and wife, regardless of her schooling” (56, 3). Besides, in general, motherhood is highly appreciated, but it is “even better, if they [women] give birth to sons” (55, 11). History and culture impacts on the valuation of boys over girls, and “until the early

1990s - - the education system had glaring disparities arising from historical and cultural factors that regarded the male sex being more important than the female” (56, 7). It is also stated that if the people “can learn to look beyond this African ego that fronts boys and men ahead of girls, surely the notion of gender equality can be realised” (60, 10). However, there are also statements about girls being as valued as boys or that sex does not matter. Some people consider all children as “precious gifts from God and, as little babies, they bring the same amount of joy to their parents. Not many parents regret or show remorse at having produced either a girl or a boy” (63, 5).

In Uganda, women are gaining access to the male domain through participation in adult education programs. This is enabling them to enter male areas of work and also to learn languages of power (English) previously associated only to men who have acquired formal education. 56, 9

There are also mentions about ‘male areas of work’ and that previously only men have acquired formal education. Thus, when women have access to formal education and can learn the language of power, English, also women can get access to ‘male areas’. Speaking about male areas can partly create more perceptions about separate domains for male and female.

- - if you folks [women] had maintained your God-ordained place as helpers, and not ventured out into the world of autonomy and competition, there would be no such concept as women’s rights, because your only right from the beginning was to have a man to help. Period. You got the man, you served him, the equation was complete. But now see where we got to, just because you could not rest in your God-given place! Women! So as I wind up, let us agree on this: There is no such thing as women’s rights. What we should be talking about is you fellows returning to where you all belong – at home, helping those poor guys whom God said should not be alone. 60, 5

Even though there were expression stating that both men and women depend on each other, more expressions included statements about women being dependent on men and cannot make independent decisions. Women’s place is on man’s side, helping them. Sometimes this view is mentioned to be what ‘God wants’ or due to biology. If women are seen to be weaker or not suitable for certain jobs because God did not create them do that or because their biology determines them as unsuitable, it may be difficult to change these views. These may be more of the view of the mainstream or citizens whereas ACFODE tries to correct this view by emphasizing the abilities and independence of women. It is also acknowledged that women are adored: “We adore women as our mothers, cherish them as our daughters, and love them as our wives; yet often times we despise them as human beings” (55, 7). However, is recognized that there

are problematic practices attached to them, such as being street mothers who are mostly “un-covered by human rights regulations - - Actually, the only right they have is the right to remain silent, as they are often bundled off to jail by indifferent police officers, whose only motive is to ‘clear the streets’ without a care for the future of these women” (55, 7).

5.1.5 Sex should not matter too much

The danger in being too aware of possible gender differences is that we can overlook the things we have in common, the task we have to complete, and also the real differences between us as people. So perhaps a better way of thinking in our relationships, whether we are supervising, working with or reporting to someone of the opposite sex, is to see and treat them as an individual, with respect and care. 60, 11

In places, it is mentioned that sex should not matter on how people’s performance is measured, for example at work. Instead, it is claimed that “when people are given the opportunity to deliver on an assignment, success should be measured on performance, not sexes” (60, 7, 8). It is also stated that “both women and men should enjoy the world’s opportunities in equal measure as long as one possesses the qualification it takes to perform a given responsibility.” (60, 4). Thus, employees should be given same opportunities and conditions and the individual strengths and performance of the employers should be noted.

5.1.6 Men and women can work well together

- - I remember telling her that we would have to contribute and we would build it together. - Traditionally, many ladies are brought up to rely on men, believing that only men can have enough money and only men, therefore, should build homes. In the end, we both contributed money to buy our piece of land, and from the very first brick, we’ve both contributed to putting up our home. - - I was very comfortable with all the housework, which I still do to-date. I believe so much that this is one of the reasons that have ensured stability in my marriage that is now coming to a decade. 60, 10

Even though there is a lot of confrontation between men and women in the data, some parts also indicate that men and women are working well together, agreeing about issues or sharing the assignments at least in some households. With this view it is evident that there are men who respect women and families who can deal with the household chores in a non-traditional way. Agreement between the spouses and reconsidering the traditional roles in the household seem

to be perceived as necessary factor in maintaining a stable marriage. Quotation form 55, 5, “both men and women say that women’s purpose in marriage is to produce children” indicates that this is a common cultural view, and also women think that way.

It is also mentioned that both women and men depend on each other. According to 60, 11, “women’s success still depends largely on men because they have been the custodians of culture and its norms, and as such have had the opportunity to establish themselves in the highest positions of authority”, whereas men should lean on women too since “women do constitute the highest percentage of the consumer market and, thus, bring to the table a greater understanding of what makes good business – an aspect that men need in order to stay afloat as competent leaders in the marketplace”. Thus, there is a perception that both women’s and men’s contribution, skills and knowledge are needed and that this should be noted in the society.

5.1.7 Women as respected and important for the society

Today, it is widely recognised that improving women and girls’ status and advancing their rights yield benefits for the whole society. This is because women and girls are undeniably a valuable resource in the development and sustainability of a nation. - - It is on the above grounds that women and girls should be highly appreciated and their needs put at the forefront. Indeed, it is high time society realised the political, social and economic contribution that women and girls make to the development of the nation and the world at large. 60, 1

Besides several expressions that emphasize the weaker position of women compared to men, there are also mentions about women being capable as well as an important part of the society. The development of women’s issues is said to have impact on the whole society. For instance, in 56, 1 it is stated that “women have the potential to change their own economic status and that of their communities and countries in which they live yet usually women’s economic contributions are unrecognized, their work undervalued and their promise undernourished”. However, despite women’s effort, their contributions may eventually be unrecognized and undervalued. Women’s importance to the whole society and country is underlined in Arise’s texts – women are considered as “a valuable resource in the development and sustainability of a nation” (60, 1) and advancing women’s and girls’ rights “yield benefits for the whole society” (60, 1). According to 55, 1, there is a perception of women being “relevant in every sphere of society”, and thus “shall be able to receive holistic services to meet their entire scope of needs” and Arise can help Ugandans “be able to understand women better, work alongside them and the law”. It is

also acknowledged that “a better educated mother has fewer and better educated children – she is more productive at home and in the workplace and she raises a healthier family since she can better apply improved hygiene and nutritional practices” (56, 9). Offering women education is also important since “the economic benefits of educating females are enormous – without education, half of the population’s labor and intellect remains untapped and thus, a country is only making half of the GDP that it could be making” (56, 3). The gender gap is claimed to be undesirable from the viewpoint of economic efficiency: “- - the economic benefits from female education are comparable to those of men. Female schooling raises human capital, productivity and economic growth as much as male schooling does” (56, 9).

In addition, the “obstacles to women’s empowerment “barriers to sustainable development and the achievement of human rights, gender equality, justice and peace. While the economic benefits of educating girls are similar to those of educating boys, most research findings suggest the social benefits are greater” (56, 1). Women are also claimed to “form a backbone of the development of the country” (55, 3), thus considered as important factor for the development of the whole country. According to 56, 7, “some argue against affirmative action on the basis that women do not really need positive discrimination because they are capable”.

I am perhaps one of the luckiest of guys, being a father to two girls. What this ideally means is that I am a lone, only man in my home, living happily in the company of females. And even if I were to claim more importance than the females in my household, they could use their numerical advantage to put me where I belong. However, what is rather true is that I have learnt to set an example to my wife and my daughters; that being male does not necessarily put me anywhere ahead of the females. 60, 10

However, I also want to state that I am an understanding man so, to an extent, I do something in my own way to bring about harmony at home. For instance, if a woman has good ideas, why not listen to her? Let her say what she wants to say. If I witnessed abuse, I would listen to both the man and the woman and talk through the issues, the cause of the conflict so as to solve the problem, from the root cause rather than merely addressing the symptoms. 63, 7, 8

Women are respected as can be seen from the quotations. For example, it is acknowledged that there are “some ladies in Uganda today who have even singlehandedly built their personal homes” (60, 10) indicating that women can be independent and able to build homes. In addition, there are perception that being a woman does not mean that she is not capable: “- - I recently asked a male friend what he thought and he said: ‘I believe both sexes are endowed equally -

The fact that someone is a lad does not mean she is not endowed academically and intellectually” (56, 7). Besides, there are husbands who respects women: “My husband respects me because it is old-fashioned to treat women like second-hand citizens. It was my choice to stay at home and bring up our children and, good enough, my husband understood the merit in this and agrees with my decision” (63, 7, 6).

Even though boys appear to be more valued than girls in the culture, there are also views about sex not being a meaningful factor. For example, “Perceptions like boys are superior to girls derail efforts of achieving gender equality - - I have two daughters and I have met many people telling me to produce more children so I can get a boy, which, of course, is being disrespectful to my daughters. - - I adore my daughters and I will not waste time in the name of trying to father a son” (60, 7, 9). It is also perceived that there is an agreement on women having been “at the forefront of initiating and mediating conflict resolution and restoration meetings. And no one disrespects them. In fact, all the men agree that the conflict solver should be the woman” (63, 6). It seems that women are respected at least when they are doing the assignments that are thought to be attached to women. Maybe getting used to something takes time, and culture is a strong factor that impacts on the prejudice of women working in certain jobs that are not yet attached to women.

5.2 Perceptions of gender equality in Arise

In this chapter, I will present the results concerning the perception of gender equality in Arise-magazine. There were expressions such as “gender equality”, “gender equity”, “gender parity”, “gender disparity”, “gender discrimination“ referring to gender equality in the data.

5.2.1 Gender inequality exists in Uganda

The Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act 2003, section 44 states that a bidder shall not be excluded from participating in public procurement and disposal on the basis of nationality, race, religion, gender or any other criterion not related to qualification, except to the extent provided for in this Act. However, when one considers the tendering process in the public sector, especially when it comes to service delivery, there is gender inequality. 60, 13

Gender inequality still seems to exist even though different legislation, acts and policies have come to address the issue of gender inequality. The gap between legislation and real life is

further discussed later in the results. Despite the legislation, several examples of the text show a perception that there still are gender inequalities in different areas in Uganda. Sometimes it is not even believed that there could be such thing as gender equality between men and women, since “even God did not create us equal” (63, 7, 4). Religion comes to play when thinking about the possibility of equality between men and women: “My remote understanding of the question of gender equality is certainly not so much about girls being literally equal to boys; otherwise this would be an attempt to undermine the divine reason why God created us different and with distinct characteristics. Rather, I am more interested in the fact and blunt reality that what [a girl] can do, [a boy] can do in case the two are subjected to similar conditions.” (60, 10). Even though it is underlined that when offered similar conditions, boys and girls can perform at the same way, there is an assumption about girls not being able to be literally equal to boys, because that would undermine the reason why God created them different with distinct characteristics. There is an assumption that God has created boys and girls different and therefore it is impossible to change the situation.

It appears to be perceived by some people that equality cannot exist “at work. Naturally, women are weak so they cannot do some jobs as well as men do, so men deserve bigger salaries than women because even when a woman works and earns, you still have to spend on her yet she never spends” (63, 7, 4). Women’s rights movement may not be supported, because women cannot be equal to men: “A man is supposed to be superior to a woman. That is how it has always been. I can never accept to live with a woman who thinks she is equal to me. I make all the decisions in our home and my wife has to follow what I decide. She can only decide about small things such as what we will eat or what clothes the children will wear” (63, 7, 7). There appears to be also fear connected to achieving gender equality: “I do not support it [the women’s rights movement], especially the equality between men and women, because when a woman feels she is equal to you, she listens to you no more. You will tell her to do something but she refuses because she does not think it is important” (63, 7, 3). There is a fear of women somehow overriding men if gender equality is reached, which will be discussed in more detail in chapters 5.3.4 and 5.3.13. The positions of men and women are seen so deeply entrenched that they are impossible to change.

While it is easier from a rights perspective to argue in favour of gender equality, many employers tend to struggle with balancing this with roles distribution from a gender perspective. In the course of their service, for example, women are likely to get pregnant, meaning they must take leave of at least three months and bear an additional seven or so months of interruptions, at least

until the children are able to comfortably stay home on their own without causing worries. During this time, male employees' work life runs with little interruption and the employees are thus able to earn more from opportunities arising at the workplace. 60, 4

The example above can be considered as perception of gender inequality existing at work. However, even though the differences are seen to be due to biology (mentioned above; woman just cannot perform same tasks as man), the biological issues are not perceived to be taken into account enough, for instance, in workplaces. There is a perception that if woman gets pregnant and has a maternity leave, male employees can meanwhile continue working without much interruption and “the employees are thus able to earn more from opportunities arising at the workplace” (60, 4). According to the data, many gender inequalities are faced especially by women which is more discussed in the next chapter.

Even though it is recognized that there still are gender inequalities, it is also acknowledged that there are several individuals, groups and organizations acting for correcting these inequalities: “- - a crop of young people with knowledge of the evils of discrimination is budding, marked by youthful exuberance and talent, with a passion for the correction of all evils brought about by gender inequality and ushering the nation into a new era of hope for the realisation of justice for all in every sphere” (60, 6).

5.2.2 Gender inequalities concern especially women

Despite the overwhelming evidence to show that women and girls are an endangered sex, society continues to turn a blind eye on the multitude of issues surrounding them, which require redress! 55, 1

However, when we take a closer look at our society (even in this era of modernity), - - women and girls experience multiple and intersecting inequalities. Structural barriers in the economic, social, political and environmental spheres produce and reinforce these inequalities. 56, 1

It is clearly visible that it is perceived throughout the data that the gender inequalities concern especially women. Mostly the inequalities mentioned in Arise's texts concern especially inequalities that women face, and thus there is a perception that mainly women suffer from inequalities in Uganda. Even though the inequalities have been addressed, the inequalities remain

in several areas. It is mentioned that there are many barriers that create and maintain the inequalities. Besides presenting opinions, many of the Arise's text are referring to a study or reports that have been made before that support their aims to enhance the situation of women.

For instance, appears to be assumption about women having a weaker position, and being an endangered sex, and still the society does not do enough to address these problems faced by women. There are mentioned numerical differences in the number of women and men: “- - It was found that women are most concentrated in nursing and midwifery positions and in administration. Men are found in a broader range of jobs, from medical doctors and dentists to allied health to support staff jobs” (60, 13). In addition it appears that “across much of the world, either by law or custom, women are still denied the right to own land or inherit property, obtain access to credit, attend school, earn income and progress in their profession free from job discrimination” (56, 1) and women “have less access to property ownership, and are the more affected sex in terms of education due to cultural influence” (56, 9). It is also stated that “society continues to turn a blind eye to the multitude of issues surrounding them [women] - - some of these issues include early child marriage, land and property rights, education, maternal health and domestic violence, among others” (60, 1).

There are claimed to be “- - social norms, behaviour and gender stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination, inequality and rights violation, especially against women and girls” (60, 1). There are also challenges “such as a large number of women have unequal access to quality health services” (55, 3). It seems that especially women's health services need developing. Even though there have been attempts to narrow the gender gap, for example by affirmative action, “Ugandan girls and women still lag behind due to negative cultural attitudes and failure to attain or complete school. There remain serious obstacles to access to education and other social services for women and girls in Uganda” (56, 7). Besides, 56, 3 states that “formal education is reserved for men who occupy the more important and elite roles in government and society”, whereas “in the traditional African setting, women used and still do receive some sort of informal education”. It appears to be thought that women are at educational disadvantage compared to men. In addition, the perception of men being culturally dominant continues here, since they occupy the more important roles in government and society and the formal education is reserved for them (see quotation from 56, 3). As women's education is not culturally highly valued (as can also be seen in chapter 5.1.4) and, as 56, 3 continues, there is not “a positive view on females who advance into higher educational levels”, and this type of “cultural predispositions toward

gender inequality are a strong hindrance to female education”. This kind of views are seen to cause inequalities for women.

Girls are considered to be “at an educational disadvantage compared to men and boys” (56, 5) and having “higher drop-out rates at primary level especially in upper primary classes” (56, 5). Girls may dropout from school “because there are no safe and private sanitation facilities or sanitary materials for them during their menstruation period - - In this case, the service deficiency in water and sanitation directly impacts on the quality of education services.” (60, 13). In addition, “early marriage and teenage pregnancy are a detriment on female education, particularly for higher levels of education. Often, families will arrange a marriage for their daughter while she is still in her teenage years, and thus interrupt her educational path. The daughter may also become pregnant early, leading to many un-wanted early pregnancies” (56, 3). 60, 9 supports this perception: “- - the likelihood of all these girls finishing their education is lowered by early marriages/pregnancies” and continues by stating that for those who persevere to the end, marketplace stigma awaits them as they go head to head with the dominant males that control the sphere”. This indicates that, although a woman manages to finish the school, there may still be challenges in the working life due to “marketplace stigma” and the dominant males who control the sphere – thus, there may be challenges to get a job for women even though they finish school.

There is also a assumption of “overt disrespect of women” in the culture. It is thought that “little boys are erroneously being raised to view little girls as sex objects” (60, 9), especially through media, and “the legacy of gender discrimination still runs deep in our society” (60, 9) as well as “negative attitudes in society against women” (60, 9).

Gender inequality is something that I witness on a daily basis in all spheres of life, but the most vivid one was when I stood for the guild presidency at Makerere University. Very few believed in my capability. They said I was not as vigorous as men and that I was soft in approach and so I would easily be compromised simply because I am a woman. Some even dismissed my candidature, saying I was standing because I am a woman. Fortunately, such talk did not derail me from pursuing my goal. I stood firm in my conviction and when we went to the polls, I was not just a woman but a true politician. I was voted into office not because I am a woman but because of what I promised I would deliver. 60, 7, 12

Even though it is stated that “one would argue that the political environment is now conducive for women to stand in elective politics and influence policy (60, 13) it appears to be perceived

that “not many women stand and win competitive elective positions” (60, 13) and most of the women in Parliament “stood on affirmative action” (60, 13), a practice that have evoked contradictory opinions. 60, 6 supports this perception: “The number of women in leadership is far behind that of men” and “in terms of political representation, men occupy most of the mainstream seats in Parliament and at local councils whilst most women are elected on the basis of the affirmative action policy which takes women as a marginalised group”. Perceptions of inequalities faced by women include not trusting in women’s capabilities and only standing for election because she is a woman (see quotation from 60, 7, 12).

Workplace politics still has its cold fingers firmly draped around women’s necks. Should a woman start to rise in the ranks over her male peers, the notion that she had sex with her bosses to attain her position will become the automatic consolation for counterparts who don’t believe that she could ever genuinely merit such authority over them. 60, 9

There is also recognized to be a “growing tendency of women getting the jobs much more easily than their male counterparts” (60, 4). However, the same quotation continues by stating that “the difference, though, is that in many instances, the women are favoured squarely both for reasons to do with suitability for the job and, in cases where the employers are males, other non-job-related reasons may come into play. In both instances, the women are still justifiably seen to face discrepancies in pay and the work environment in comparison with their male counterparts” (60, 4). As the quotation from 60, 9 above shows, it is not often believed in woman’s skills but even thought that she had sex with her boss in order to attain her position in the workplace. This indicates a work environment in which the women’s capabilities are not believed in.

Besides directly mentioning the word gender inequality and connecting it to the women’s rights, there are mentions about problematic practices towards women. For example, it is considered problematic that at some workplaces the employers get more salary from field work: “I have also observed from experience that in some workplaces, especially in the non-governmental organisations, staff tend to earn more from field activities than from their monthly salary. It is quite tricky for most women to take part in these field activities, particularly those who are married and with children to care for, as staying out of home for a long time may only work to strain families” (60, 4). The perception of women as caregivers is also strong in this expression. It is claimed that in this kind of situation women are often forced to choose “whether to follow company schedules or forego their jobs, an issue that can sometimes be quite traumatising” (60,

4). It is quite challenging that women's only options, in order to properly be able to take care of their family, is seen to forego their jobs or follow company's lines with the risk of their family being "neglected". This kind of decision may be even traumatising for women. In addition, it appears to be thought that "the odds are unevenly stacked up against women politicians" (60, 8) due to the "highly sexualised political space" and sexual harassment in political field that "dampen women's confidence and effectiveness" (60, 8).

Other than workplaces and political field, problematic practices are perceived to take place at home and in the community. These practices are perceived to concern especially women, including female genital mutilation, early marriage and pregnancies and widow inheritance. The practices appear to happen especially in the rural areas: "I think the women's organisations should be more visible in the rural areas because it is in the villages that you will hear more reports of teenage pregnancies and child marriages" (63, 7, 6) and "- - majority of women particularly in rural areas still remain largely vulnerable to male chauvinism" (55, 10). Widow inheritance refers to a practice in which the late husband's wife is inherited by, for instance, her brother-in-law. This practice is claimed to start "as a compassionate move by brothers in-law to sustain the life of a widow and her orphaned children, but this practice that still exists especially in Northern Uganda, is a discreet threat to many women's lives" (55, 10). It is perceived that "in most cases, it appears that the pursuing in-laws are not necessarily caring, but they prey on hapless widows as soft sex objects" (55, 10). This practice is challenging and puts women in an inferior position yet "very few perpetrators have been made to face the law" (55, 10). In some cases, the widow is not inherited but rejected by the family of a husband: "My husband died after we had had 5 children. His family rejected us and we couldn't continue living with them" (55, 7). This appears to be because the women do not have the role of managing and financing the household, or they do not have access to their husband's land ownership after they die. The family of the husband may reject the widow and her children leaving living on the street as their only option. The issue of street mothers appears to be an unattended problem in Uganda. Besides husband's death and rejection by his family, women may end up living in the streets due to poverty, broken homes or domestic violence (55, 7).

Besides widow inheritance, domestic violence takes place: "Domestic violence happens in almost every home and, sometimes, a woman can be annoying so you cannot blame the man for slapping her" (63, 7, 7), "Concerning (gender-based) violence, most times, it is women who are the cause of such violence, so there is nothing much I can do about it" (63, 7, 4), "- - the truth

is, women are ill-treated - In the communities where I live, I see violence against women” (63, 7, 3). Sometimes it is perceived by the citizens that woman herself causes the violence for being annoying and thus cannot blame the man for violence. The practices are perceived to happen due to “poverty but, most times, it is ignorance about the dangers of those practices” (63, 7, 6). Justifying gender-based violence by blaming women for being annoying can somewhat indicate the ignorance of the consequences of the violence. In addition, the practice of FGM (female genital mutilation) appears to take place in Uganda. There may be “repercussions of FGM during childbirth”, such as “over-bleeding, delayed recovery from pregnancy and a high risk of death from infections” (60, 6).

There is also expression that indicates that men need legislation in order to understand the problems of having sex when the woman is in pain: “There are no policies telling my husband not have sex with me when I am in pain. I wonder how many women have run away from their husbands because of this [regarding menstrual cramps]” (55, 8). Without legislation it may be impossible to persuade men not to have sex during menstruation or when woman has pain. Besides domestic violence, abuse may also happen in institutions where women search for help: “On the other hand, it is unfortunate that women are no longer only at risk at home, but also through the very institutions from which they seek redress in case of emergency. Most notably, health institutions are major culprits in this case” (55, 9). Doctors may “sexually assault their female patients” (55, 9) which can lead to the situation in which “several African women prefer to take the unsafe options of self medication when ill” (55, 9). Thus, it seems very problematic situation for women who seek for help but end up being abused in the institutions that should offer care. It is also mentioned that the challenges that women face have even wider consequences, such as contributing “to the increase of infant and under-five mortality crisis” (55, 3).

5.2.3 The ideal situation of gender equality is that men and women are equal

In my view, people who feel insecure will always want to take over. Patriarchy sought to reorganize society in a way that gives man the authority. It is important for the woman to struggle to reclaim, not a state of authority and domination, but a state of equality and respect, of an egalitarian relationship between men and women. 63, 3

There are several expressions that indicate that the ideal situation of gender equality is that women and men are equal and have equal rights and opportunities: “Sustainable development is only possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential.” (56,

1) and many people in Africa share “the ideal of creating a world where women can enjoy equal rights with men” (63, 2). There is an acknowledgement of “women who fight for the rights of other women to be equal to men” (63, 7, 7). It is stated that “both men and women need equal opportunities” (60, 7, 8) and there are “advantages of women having the same opportunities as men” (63, 4). Already in childhood girls and boys should be given “the same opportunities, like education” (60, 7, 12). Besides, it is claimed that “women and men should and must be entitled to equal rights” (60, 4). In addition, it is necessary for the “children and young people who are the adults of tomorrow” (60, 6) to understand “the importance of the equality between women and men, and girls and boys” (60, 6).

It is mentioned that it may be more useful to speak about equal opportunities rather than women’s rights, since the language use impacts on how people understand the situation. Speaking only about women’s rights may not help people understand the benefits of women having equal opportunities with men. Also, giving boys and girls the same opportunities already in childhood and giving both boys and girls helps address the gender inequality question. Especially fathers can contribute in gender equality by giving inheritance to their daughters, and the role of men in empowering women and enhancing gender equality will be further discussed later in the results.

Quotation from 60, 6 mentions that it is aimed at leading “young people in cohesive efforts to end violence against women and build a society where everyone prospers”. This may mainly concern women, but it mentions everyone and thus the agenda of improving gender issues is not only about women’s rights but that men and women are equal. These views are supported by the perception that emphasized that “the advancement of women’s rights does not take away the men’s rights” (63, 4), which will be discussed more in detail in chapter 5.3.3.

5.2.4 Progress has been made in order to reach gender equality

On the global scene, Uganda is fairly well rated in the effort to reduce the gender gap. According to the UN 2015 Gender Gap Report, which scored a combined index of economic, education, health and political aspects of gender-gap indicators, Uganda emerged number 58 out of 145 countries assessed. 60, 2

Progress has, for instance, been made in enrolments at primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. Considerable progress has also been made in women’s participation in leadership and politics. Up to 40% of Members of Parliament (MPs) are women and, to a smaller extent, this is

reflected at lower levels of leadership, in the private sector and in both public and private institutions. Very modest progress has been made in the area of economic emancipation. 60, 2

In the world of work, large numbers of women have entered the professions, the trades, and businesses of every kind. Ranks of the clergy, the politicians, the specialists, the military, the news-room and elsewhere have been opened up for women from their 'traditional' role of engaging in house chores. 63, 2

Women have also been empowered through this system [adult education program]; they are able to persuade their husbands to listen to them and can influence their family affairs. It has also increased the ability of women and girls to claim their other rights and achieve status in society. 56, 9

Several expressions indicate that progress has been made in order to reach gender equality. For example, women have “held powerful positions in government” (63, 5). The quotation of 63, 5 indicates that gender advocacy has been an important factor in achieving “affirmative action in public universities and in political spaces” and “this, in turn, has led to arise in the number of women standing for public leadership positions”. Besides the political field, there has been progress regarding women’s working life: “In the clay factory where I work, most of the employees are women and many of them are married. The fact that their husbands allow them to come to work shows that the impression that women are inferior to men is outdated - - . I support independent women because my wife also works and I do not make any plans at home without listening to her thoughts and valuing her input. I hate gender-based violence and in this day and age it is strange that there are men who still beat women.” (63, 7, 2). The quotation from 63, 7, 5 suggests that “all in all, today women enjoy their rights. For example, I allow my wife to work”. The examples show that also women have the possibility to work nowadays (even though they are married) and their role as a manager of household chores is not as strong as before.

However, although the expressions make clear that there has been progress in women’s situation, the use of language itself contains elements that question the full improvement of women’s situation. For example, the quotation above includes an expression about husbands allowing women to go to work which indicates that husbands and men still have something to do with women’s access to work. Of course, it should still be noticed that this is huge progress in women’s situation – that they have access to work. In the same quotation, after all, he states that he supports his wife being independent and husbands have realised that their wives can

also contribute to their shared household. He also claims that he does not make decisions without listening to his wife, which is a sign of mutual respect. It seems that there has been progress in treating women – they are not seen to be inferior to men anymore or at least more people think that women *should not* be inferior to men anymore.

There is a perception of “African women, acting together, adding their small stones to the grand mosaic, have increased their rights against all odds, non-violently, from an initial position of powerlessness - - They have clearly been successful in irrevocably changing the circumstances and hopes of fellow women” (63, 2) In addition, women’s movement and activists have helped women to participate in different types of jobs and manage life without a husband: “I could not have done that without the encouraging support of women who fight for the rights of other women. Throughout the years, I have met such women who have encouraged me not to look down on myself or wait to find a husband who can help me look after my children. Because of their advice, I have done all kinds of jobs. At the end of it all, I managed to build a house.” (63, 7, 1). It is also recognized that “- - more rural women are taking a lot of interest in gender advocacy as compared to their urban counterparts and, as a result, many are reporting, for example, domestic violence as it occurs and are also engaged in economic activities to uplift themselves and their families” (60, 3). Women’s rights movement has also “advocated for the abolition of retrogressive socio-cultural practices that affect women” (60, 3) and “also tremendously contributed to Uganda’s policy and development agenda” (60, 3). Women’s movements have participated, for example, in passing Acts that address the issues of women: “So far, the women’s movement has successfully epitomised collective action as a tool to partner with women politicians and influence the legislative agenda of Uganda. The passing of laws on Domestic Violence and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), such as the Domestic Violence Act (2010), bear witness to the power of strong partnership” (60, 8).

In addition, there have been many efforts in terms of policies, acts and legislation aimed at improving gender equality. As quotation from 56, 5 suggests, the government of Uganda “developed the National Strategy for Girls’ Education aimed at eradicating barriers that hindered girls from attending school” and later “the Gender in Education Policy, which was designed to ensure that the needs of the girl-child were met “. The legislation has contradictory outcomes that will be further discussed in the next section of the results.

5.2.5 Still much needs to be done in order to reach gender equality

While these efforts must be appreciated, we can go one better. Everyone has a responsibility and role to play to ensure all policies support better education opportunities for girls, and that such policies are translated into action. 56, 5

Efforts to change the situation of women in Uganda focusing on narrowing the gender gap have made remarkable progress over the past 30 years. However, the situation of women and the gender gap in social, economic, health and political aspects remain dire and unacceptable. 60, 2

- - though much has been accomplished, a lot still remains to be done since substantial barriers to the full equality of Africa's women still stand before their freedom. 63, 2

While there is an acknowledgement of progress that has been made in the field of gender equality, there is also a perception that still much needs to be done. Enhancing gender equality is perceived to be “still grossly at baby steps stage” (60, 10). For example, “there has been an argument that while the number of women in the political space has increased, their meaningful contribution is yet to be realised” (60, 3). It may be not enough to have a certain number of women participating in the political field, since “oftentimes women MPs and those holding significant positions in government have been compromised to serve the interests of their political parties but not the interests of the women or the country at large” (60, 3). Sometimes women have not supported “did not support the bill that was intended to take care of the interests of women and their rights” (60, 3). This indicates that women’s increasing number of participation does not necessarily guarantee that women’s issues are looked after. It can be a problem that the women in parliament do not address the situation of the women of the whole country but the agenda of their political party. Besides, female participation has been increased “participation in politics, with excellent laws that uphold the rights of minorities through affirmative action at both local and national levels. - - Despite all this, however, the nature of the Ugandan model of women’s inclusion in political leadership has raised questions about the fact that despite an increase in numbers, women politicians do not seem to be at the centre of debate with their male counterparts, preferring instead to compete amongst themselves for space to raise gender issues” (60, 12). In another quotation from 60, 12, it is acknowledged that the changes in the political field “are far-reaching for Uganda’s economy and culture”, however clearly much still needs to be done regarding improving women’s political participation in Uganda”. In addition “there is “a marked difference between the enrolment rates between males and females in the greater rural areas, and although the Ugandan government has worked hard to

overcome the gender gap in the formal educational system by making education compulsory through the UPE and USE policies, there is still much work to do” (56, 3) indicating that there is a need to work more to overcome the gender gap. Quotation from 56, 7 states that “even though there have been “efforts towards eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education levels” and “gender gaps in enrolment in primary school narrowed significantly”, “this success hides tremendously high and increasing drop-out rates, as well as poor access to schools in most rural areas” and “. Primary education enrolment rates do not reflect the gender disparity in completion rates both at primary and secondary levels”. There is claimed to be gender disparities in enrolment rates in higher levels of education “with only one third of girls continuing in school to the age of 18, compared to 50% of boys” (56, 7). In quotations from 56, 3 it is claimed that “the most important but complex factor to look at when studying female education is the cultural mindset”. In another quotation from the same article, it is acknowledged that “the mentality towards women is changing” but “there is still strong, pervasive sexism in most African communities” (56, 7).

So over time, the generations that ensued have been privy to more of the same cultural delinquency in an evolving journey of prejudice. Where in the past girls were dragged off to be circumcised, the recent enactment of international and local laws against this has seen a reduction in female genital mutilation in the targeted communities and, in its stead, a rise in cases of rape and defilement of girls who are considered prostitutes because they aren't circumcised. 60, 9

“While an increasing number of girls and women are empowered today, there are still issues, such as early marriages, teenage pregnancy and female genital mutilation, that are of grave concern to the movement. We still need to come out together and strongly to tackle these problems,”
- -. 63,8

Even though there has been progress in women’s empowerment, and for example female genital mutilation has been made illegal, there is, on the contrary, the unequal practices may take different forms over time, as the quotation above (60, 9) indicates. Thus, it appears that there are still problems that need to be addressed. The power of legislation is also questioned: if there are such cultural views so deep in the society, is it enough to address them with legislation? It may be that despite new legislation, discrimination may change its form. It is considered that “with almost as many women as there are men in the UPDF, Uganda Police, Education sector, Judiciary, Legislature, Entrepreneurship, Manufacturing industry, Sports and the Entertainment industry, wouldn’t it be right to say that the Ugandan Woman is fully emancipated? With success stories - -, wouldn’t it be right to assert that the Women’s Movement has achieved its goal?”

(63, 6). In addition, it is stated that “with time the gradual amplification of women’s voices through the women’s movement has opened the eyes and ears of society to the apparent crisis of survival facing women across Africa - Seemingly, men, women and children across all spheres have been reached with information about the rights and privileges of women as equal contributors to community “ (60, 9). However, the same article continues: “At last! All is well with the world...or is it? Can it possibly be true that about three decades of advocacy and communication against the mistreatment of females has suddenly turned the tide of prejudice that goes back many centuries? Are today’s youth in one accord against gender-based violence? Can we confidently countdown the days to the dawn of a violence-free society where women and men work respectfully alongside one another?“ (60, 9), which questions the achievement of women’s empowerment.

Even though there are more women working and sharing their success stories there still is a perception that more needs to do in order to fully attain gender equality. Gender-based violence still appears to take place: “Yet you would be alarmed at the prevalence of Gender Based Violence in Uganda - - from physical torture to sexually suggestive language” (63, 6). In addition, quotation from 63, 7, 5 acknowledges that women enjoy their rights today but agrees that “there are still problems, though; I see violence in homes, in my neighbourhood“ (63, 7, 5). This implies that, despite the efforts and progress made in, for example, women’s empowerment, full gender equality is not attained, and more work must be done in order to achieve even better situation.

Although gender inequalities have been addressed, they may not have helped achieve gender equality. For example, affirmative action, has been an intervention used to enhance women’s and girls’ access to education. However, affirmative action is claimed to “not having any effect on gender equity - - because in spite of them, gender disparities often persist” (56, 7). In another quotation from the same article it is also stated that “Women and girls who gain from affirmative action in education are considered inferior to others and sometimes called names suggesting they are below standard”, which may discourage other women to join the affirmative action programmes (56, 7). There is much stigmatization connected to affirmative action programmes, and “it has put a majority of girls and women into a very bad spot” (56, 7). It appears that some people perceive affirmative action as ineffective intervention to enhance gender inequality since it seems to continue putting women and girls in the weaker position and making them marginalized group. It seems to be perceived that due to affirmative action programs, women are not

believed to be capable or being chosen to education because of their skills or performance, but because they are women.

While there has been widespread consensus on the importance of prioritizing women and girls' issues in national education policy processes, empirical evidence has also shown how good policies on girls' education have made little difference at school level. This may be because they are not prioritized by central or local officials, or because they are not accompanied by extra resources. 56,5

Uganda is said to be one of the countries with very nice laws on paper but most are either not implemented or if they are, it's haphazard. 55, 10

The gap between legislation and real life may also cause challenges for reaching gender equality. Even though there is legislation designed to address women's issues, they seldom make difference in real life. In quotation from 60, 4 it is claimed that "many African countries have moved the above aspirations and others a step further by having them domesticated in their constitutions" however, "unfortunately, there persists a disparity between what is provided by law and what happens in real life". There are many claims about good policies and legislation that address the situation for women, but that do not effectively apply in real life, for example: "While the Uganda Constitution of 1995 undertakes to outlaw any cultural practices that are not in conformity with the spirit of the Constitution, very little efforts have been put in place to ensure observance of this provision" (55, 10). Even though the participation of women in decision making levels has been addressed by legislation, there still is "low-level participation of women in district structures and platforms for debate" and "men continue to dominate the decision-making process" (60, 12). Also, many organisations have gender provisions that are "but merely mentioned in the booklets and not much seems to reflect them in real life" (60, 4).

It is also claimed that patriarchal culture can change its form, for example as a quotation from 63, 3 shows: "When you look at the expression of this younger generation (especially in the music industry), at one level you get the feeling that the girls now have guts, they are bold, they are courageous - -" however "Flinging the naked female body before the camera (in music videos) is to go right into the trap that people have protested, of looking at the woman's body as a sex object. Because the buyer is a little patriarch. I think we are not living our real identity and the dignity of our womanhood - -" (63, 3). This indicates that even though women may see themselves as progressed and their situation enhanced, the situation is not really at women's control, because the form of patriarchy has only changed its form.

5.3 Perceptions of improving gender equality in *Arise*

The remaining injustices can be – and are being– tackled daily in the courts and conference rooms, in homes and organisations, in local communities, at workplaces and on the playing fields of different states in the continent. 63, 2

As there are several expressions indicating that the situation gender equality needs improving in Uganda (presented in more detail in chapter 5.2), I decided to include expressions concerning the ways to improve gender equality. In the data there are concrete ideas about how to improve it, as well as challenges that should be considered when aiming at enhancing gender equality in Uganda. The need to improve especially women's and girls' position emerges from the data, as several expressions mention that especially empowering women is needed. Enhancing gender equality is in places directly connected to enhancing women's rights and position or empowering women. Thus, there is a perception that gender equality enhances especially through empowering women and their situation in Uganda. In places, it is not literally said that enhancing women's rights equals enhancing gender equality, but since it was found earlier in the results that gender inequalities concern especially women and that women are the 'weaker sex', the presented ways to improve women's situation can be considered as ways to enhance gender equality.

Gender equality is perceived as an issue that is driven by women's movement, and women's movement is an effective factor working in the field of gender equality. Thus, enhancing gender equality appears to be closely attached to enhancing women's rights and position. In the data, the gender agenda seems to mainly mean empowering women, but also the whole society since enhancing women's rights means enhancing the situation for all. In addition, women's rights advancement is thought to have positive impact on wider community.

5.3.1 Empowering women

Since it was found earlier that gender inequalities concern especially women, it can be assumed that enhancing the position of women is considered also as a way to enhance gender equality at this point, even though the concept of gender equality is not literally mentioned in all quotations presented in this chapter.

There are several expressions indicating how to improve especially women's and girls' positions and rights, for example, empowering women to make educated decisions regarding their

health. According to a quotation from 55, 11, young women must be empowered “be able to make - and act on - informed decisions about whether and when to get pregnant”, another quotation from this article continuing by claiming that “to effectively act on their reproductive demands, young women must first become aware that they have the right to control their childbearing. They must have knowledge of contraceptive methods and how to access them, and finally, they must have an enabling environment that allows them to effectively utilize contraception and abortion. - - Now is the time to deliver for the women of the next generation by ensuring that they are free to determine their reproductive paths and empowered to make these intentions a reality.” (55, 11).

According to a quotation from 55, 11, at first it is necessary to tear down “the physical barriers that prevent universal access to contraception and safe abortion” but “the more insidious social barriers” should also be removed. Removing only physical barriers to the access of health services, for example contraception and abortions, is not enough but also the social barriers should be removed so that the women can properly benefit from the health services and have courage to use them. Women should also have “a platform to air their views and rights regards their sexual and reproductive health - -” (55, 8). In addition, it is claimed that women’s “economic empowerment is also important.” (60, 7, 11) and “efforts should be made to increase women’s economic independence through income-generating projects and supportive legislation” (60, 2). It should be made sure that the women get information regarding their health needs and rights, and that they are also empowered to execute this information in practice.

Women should be empowered “to take up leadership, promote accountability in governance, and question processes and procedures” (63, 8). If women are empowered with information, they can “report cases of abuse and tackle problems without necessarily asking for help from national leaders but, instead, leaders within their communities” (63, 8). A quotation from 56, 5 claims that, if women are empowered “themselves to participate effectively in national decision-making processes and to hold government accountable for their actions” and their knowledge “of the issues to inform policy decisions” is increased, “women and girls can continuously contribute towards devising innovative responses to major issues affecting them”. It appears to be perceived that without women in decision-making, women’s issue will be not addressed effectively or not at all. On the other hand, “when women are empowered to be leaders and entrepreneurs in service delivery, when spaces are open for them to participate in decision-making, to speak out and hold their leaders accountable on minimum standards of service delivery, access, quality, affordability and sustainability of services can be guaranteed” (60,

13). The same quotation continues by claiming that “the accrued benefits of women’s inclusion are essential to building a prosperous economy” (60, 13). Women should also “be deliberately empowered to demand for accountability from their leaders” (60, 13), which indicates women’s own important role in empowerment.

It is suggested to “begin empowering women from childhood by instilling in them concepts of leadership, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, effective interpersonal communication and public speaking, among others” (60, 6) as these skills “will enable women to learn leadership roles at a tender age and, therefore, practise them while growing up” (60, 6), and thus “be better focused in their undertakings and positively influence those they interact with, thereby improving the situations in which they operate” 60, 6). Learning skills attached to leadership may allow more women to enter in leadership positions in workplaces later in life. These skills are quite a contrast for the ‘traditional’ view of women as dependent on men and not being capable of making decisions. This may be a way to change this view in the future.

5.3.2 Women’s access to decision-making and making women’s own voice heard

Women’s participation in leadership and in politics at all levels, but especially at higher levels, must be strongly promoted. 60, 2

Since it is perceived in the data that women are the weaker sex and have worse position in the society compared to men, it is logical that there is a perception of women’s own participation and their voice being heard as important factors to enhance women’s position and hence gender equality. Without hearing women’s voice in the society, it would be quite impossible to understand and address the challenges and problems they face effectively. A quotation from 60, 7, 8 claims that “[enhancing gender equality] begins with having trust in women’s capabilities and backing them for positions of influence, for over time, women have been tested with powerful positions and have excelled in their work”, indicating that there should be no doubt about women’s capability to work or make decisions.

- - it is important to have women in positions of power. She asserts, ‘These women should not only be in positions of power but also be able to influence decision-making. This way, they can bring the concerns of women to the fore, to be debated, and make sure the policies that arise out of those debates get into the national budgets. This is because policies need financial resources to be implemented. The lack of women in positions that influence service delivery results in unfair

allocation of resources which, in turn, leads to poor service delivery. 'Most chief executive officers and district planners are men and they are the ones in charge of making budgets and allocating funds,' - - 'Because women are not in those positions, it is not easy for their concerns to be heard.' 60, 13

In a quotation from 60, 2, it is stated that “it is crucial to strengthen women’s asset security, visibility and influence on improving livelihoods” and “these efforts should open the way for rapid attainment of gender parity in Uganda”. If women are not included in decision-making, the issues of women may be unaddressed (see a quotation from 60, 13 above). Women are claimed to be a majority of the population, and a “failure to include the majority voice would distort democracy and amount to infringement on the fundamental rights of women” (60, 13).

If woman gets a position in decision-making, and for example, gets to run a market “the amenities that make life easier for women” (60, 13) will be noticed – for example toilets “with running water, cleanliness as a priority, or even small nurseries” (60, 13) for children of the women who work at the markets. There is a perception that especially these issues need redress at the moment, and that women would be the best to promote these issues. As there were perceptions about women having the weaker position in the society compared to men and also less decision-making power, it is logical that the ways to improve women’s situation and gender equality include women’s own activity and empowering women to use their own voices. Besides empowering women and hearing their own voice, it is suggested that their “domestic workloads and risks” (60, 2) are reduced.

5.3.3 Gender equality as not only women’s issue

The issue of gender equality must be moved away from being a women’s campaign because that’s what many in the population perceive it to be. In reality, gender equality is part and parcel of our human life whichever way we look at it and must, therefore, be critically observed at family level if we are to make headway in making it a dream come true. 60, 10

It is emphasized in the data that gender equality is not only women’s issue but a “part of our human life” (60, 10). The women’s movement should not address only women but “be all-inclusive because it should be about social justice for all, not only women” (63, 4). As another quotation from 63, 4, continues: “We have always focused on the girl child but where are the boys who are going to marry our daughters?” - - ‘The boy child also needs to be appreciated

and prepared, not to be condemned to the camp of oppressors.’ It is this inclusivity in the messages that will work to erode the suspicion and mistrust about the movement. The messages, for example, that call upon women and girls to stand up for their rights should never ignore the role of men in achieving gender equality.” (63, 4).

5.3.4 Men should not be seen as targets of the women’s movement nor discriminated

*“When I am working at the grass roots I talk about equal opportunities, not women’s rights,” - -
“You do not want a mere word to stop people from understanding the advantages of women having the same opportunities as men”. 63, 4*

Besides thinking gender equality as not only women’s issue, there are expressions that indicate that that advancing women’s rights should not happen to the detriment of men’s rights. In the findings concerning perceptions of gender, men were strongly described as dominant or even ‘oppressors’. In addition, when it comes to work of women’s movement and women’s activists, a quotation from 63, 5 states that sometimes there may be a “temptation to isolate men from women’s engagements” and point “their ‘guns’ towards men as oppressors” in women’s organisations. A quotation from 63, 5 continues that “temporarily, many achieve the desired empathy within their circles, but this does not translate into tangible solutions at family level“. In the beginning of the women’s movement it might even have seemed like “an anti-men crusade” (63, 6). It is thus obvious that men might become defensive if they are accused too much or left out of the women’s activity. Thus, even though the findings of perceptions of gender indicated that there is a perception of men as dominant and even ‘oppressors’, they should not be seen the target of women’s movement or discriminated because they are men.

However, it should be emphasized by the movement that “the advancement of women’s rights does not take away the men’s rights - Rather, - - “it is about both sexes being at a level where they can access equal opportunities” (63, 4), when they speak about gender inequality and address citizens. Men and women should co-operate. If men are seen as targets or oppressors, it may only threaten them and make women’s movement seem repulsive to them. According to a quotation from 63, 4, at first “the movement promoted the equality of rights and opportunities for both sexes— There were evident fruits of peacebuilding, livelihoods improvement and political participation, among others”. However, as the movement progressed, there was “mistrust, resistance to and misconceptions about the intentions and goals of the movement” (63, 4) that could be “attributed to sheer fear that a section of the population –women – was breaking

free, free of the bonds that society had always placed on it” (63, 4). There was a perception of women’s rights activists “as women who are angry about the existence of men and will do anything to usurp the position of men in society and families, and that women’s rights activists were bent on the sole goal of promoting and elevating the interests of women above those of men” (63, 4). According to a quotation from 63,4, if the message of the women’s rights activists is that “men are evil beings standing in the way of women’s dreams” it may only cause “mistrust and resistance to the movement”. After all, seeing men as oppressors does not help. In order to women to understand men, gender equality and successful collaboration between men and women happen, co-operation between men and women is needed. Otherwise there is the risk of “reaping resentment” (63, 5). Men may also become “saboteurs of women’s economic empowerment because they interpreted the approach to mean women will rule over them” (60, 7, 1).

Women’s movements may be an effective part of enhancing women’s rights and gender equality, but it must be considered how they address people and what kinds of messages they pass on: “The coming up of women’s rights movements and, indeed, women’s organisations could have been the right approach to furthering equality“ (60, 4) - however, sometimes women’s organisations may “have a tendency of employing only females, inadvertently causing inequality at the expense of males” (60, 4) since men are claimed to “have for long taken the fatter jobs and now women have such an opportunity in their own organisations– which, unfortunately, only has us going round in circles on the issue of gender equality” (60, 4). However, this only causes gender inequality to the other direction – against men, which is not the purpose of advancing gender equality. In addition, using affirmative action as a tool to enhance women’s position in the society is considered as “reverse discrimination against men and boys” (56, 7) by some. It is also reminded that gender equity issues affect society as a whole (56, 7), although some people has viewed affirmative action as only a charity scheme for women and girls (56, 7).

5.3.5 Men as necessary actors in women’s empowerment

- - in recent years there has been growing recognition that you cannot achieve gender equality without men. 63, 4

Achieving women and girls’ rights is about men and boys standing up to speak out and take action in support of their sisters, mothers, daughters and partners because silence and inaction by good men and boys only conspire against women. 60, 1

As discussed in the previous chapter, it is stated in the data that men should not be seen as enemies or be left out of advancement of women's rights. Indeed, it is thought that men are a vital part of enhancing the situation of women and involving men in the pursuit of women's rights and gender equality has many types of benefits. There is a strong perception that gender equality and women's empowerment cannot be reached without men's engagement. It is stated that "men should be at the forefront of ensuring that this [both men and women having equal opportunities] happens" (60, 7, 8). Since it was found earlier that the political space remains a highly sexual including sexual harassment towards women, it "calls for male politicians to directly address the unacceptable situation by holding the perpetrators accountable" (60, 8). In addition, "the party system in Uganda has also promoted a system of patronage, in which female leaders who are elected through affirmative action seats are made to feel inferior and incapable of effectively lobbying for gender sensitivity and responsiveness in policy-making and implementation - this calls for male leaders to strengthen structures within the party system and accommodate the views of these women leaders as legitimate and worthy of acting upon" (60, 8).

Men can "support women to advance in their career" (60, 7, 9). At workplaces, "as a CEO you have to allocate a budget for it and come up with gender-sensitive policies and programmes that empower women and promote gender equality, otherwise gender equality may be hard to realise - there are more male CEOs than women, so it is the responsibility of the male CEOs to use their positions to make the world a better place" (60, 7, 9). This refers to the bigger amount of men and therefore a greater responsibility to observe that the issues regarding gender equality are addressed. A quotation from 60, 7, 13 continues: "Men in managerial positions can deliberately champion gender equality by coming up with quotas for women to achieve gender equality. They can advocate for friendly gender policies that empower women like training, mentoring and providing an atmosphere where they feel accepted."

At home, fathers can do a lot to enhance gender equality: "Fathers can empower women by treating their children, both girls and boys, equally. This can be done by giving the same opportunities, like education, to both boys and girls. Fathers should also give their daughters inheritance. This will help address the gender inequality question." (60, 7, 12). A quotation from 60, 7, 11 states that men should "provide their children, both boys and girls, with equal opportunities, for example in education and in the distribution of wealth" and "contribute to shaping their daughters into being independent-minded", which indicates the need to change the dependent position of girls and women. It is claimed that within the women's movement, "many programmes that work on gender equality, including those that tackle violence against women,

have male engagement as one of the strategies” (63, 4). If men “focus on women and girls”, it not only looks “at uplifting women and girls’ status but also ensuring that their rights are observed and respected” (60, 1).

Since men have more decision-making power, the engagement of men is important: “African societies have patriarchal family system where decisions are made by clan and local courts that are dominated by men and thus it is a mistake not to involve men in the pursuit of achieving women’s emancipation” (60, 7, 1). It is seen that it is men’s responsibility to enhance the gender issues: “The president of the country [Uganda] is a man and most of the positions of influence are filled by men, meaning that men are the majority key decision-makers” (60, 7, 11). A quotation from 60, 7, 1 supports this view: “The Lango sub-region, just like any Africa society, is a patriarchal family system where all the decisions are by clan and local council courts which are dominated and presided over by men. Therefore, it would be a very big mistake to ignore men in the struggle to achieve women’s emancipation” – one attempt “failed in Uganda because men who are decision-makers were left out” (60, 7, 1). Men should be “involved in efforts to ensure effective gender responsive service delivery because they control resources and hold positions of power” (60, 13). Men should be “at the forefront of the women’s movement because they wield power over most of the resources - it would be difficult for the women’s movement to achieve its core objective of emancipating women if men are not at the centre of it all” (60, 7, 3). There is a “need to transform gender roles between male and female, to transform unequal power relations, and to challenge negative notions of masculinity” (60, 1).

Men “are the majority in spheres such as politics, law and academia so they can utilise such positions to enact laws and policies that promote gender equality - They can also do so by supporting women in positions of influence rather than fighting them” (60, 7, 10). The perception of especially men having problematic views of women is visible here: “Many times, men are held back by tribal and cultural norms and beliefs. This needs to change. Other men are simply ignorant of the importance of gender equality, which should be addressed through sensitisation” (60, 7, 10). A quotation from 60, 7, 11 supports this view: “- - for men to appreciate that women are equally important is a crucial step in attaining gender equality. There should be a change in attitude, where men look at women as partners as opposed to objects or assets”. However, a quotation from 63, 5 reminds that neither women cannot “work in isolation” and “men must be actively coopted into the discussions, including employing them in women’s organisations by way of setting a precedent for inclusivity”.

It is also claimed that “if men become gender-sensitive, they will allow women to access, control and even own resources such as land and also engage in income-generating activities such as baking” (60, 7, 4), which indicates the women’s dependant role, and that men’s view of women need to be changed in order to reach gender equality. Besides, involvement of men would help gender equality, since “men also understand the need to respect women’s rights once they are involved” (60, 7, 5). If men are involved in promoting women’s rights, it is ensured “that they involve women and girls in decision making processes right from the family to the community level because their perceptions about women will have been changed in the process” (60, 7, 2). This includes a perception of men not respecting women, or do not necessarily realise the importance of respecting women. A quotation from 60, 7, 10 states that men are claimed to “need to realise the importance of respect for each other” and they should work “towards empowering women economically by, say, providing them with educational opportunities and, where necessary, financial business support” since “when women are financially independent, the road to gender equality becomes smoother”.

Also, gender-based violence could be reduced by involving men, “since men are the perpetrators” (60, 7, 5). Besides claiming that men have power or are the perpetrators of the problematic practices against women, it is claimed that “men are women’s partners and so have to be involved to understand why the women’s empowerment - therefore, with sensitisation, men can help uplift the status of women” (60, 7, 6) – women cannot survive alone without their partners. In addition, a quotation from 60, 1 claims that men are “equally strategic allies in the pursuit of gender equality”. Male involvement is also said to “promote partnerships” that “will help families to cater for their children, value the education of girl children, and help in planning and transparency within the homes - These partnerships also lead to equal property rights” (60, 7, 7).

The view of men having to be involved in enhancing women’s position in Uganda includes the view about men as dominant and women as dependent. Men are seen as dominant and decision-makers who have lots of power, and thus they are needed to support women’s empowerment and gender equality. A quotation from 60, 1 claims that the results of men and boys joining to help achieve gender equality “is a win for women, men and for our common humanity and society” (60, 1). It is also stated that men and boys are already “increasingly working alongside women to support and empower women and girls” (60, 1).

5.3.6 Women's movement as a meaningful actor

I understand the work of the women's movement because if it were not for the work that it has done, women would not have come this far in the pursuit of their rights. 63, 7, 6

There are acknowledgements about women's movement and activists being a necessary part of women empowerment, and thus, enhancement of gender equality. In a quotation from 63, 7, 2, there is a mention about the citizen having "heard of the groups that support women and their rights" and being "happy with the work they do". Thus, women's movement's work is acknowledged even though it has had challenges that will be further discussed later in the results. Without women's movement, it would have been impossible to "come this far in the pursuit of their [women's] rights" (63, 7, 6).

There is also a perception of women's movement as powerful tool to enhance gender equality. It is perceived that "women's rights organisations should come in strongly" (63, 7, 6) in addressing the ignorance about the dangers of the practices that especially women face, such as female genital mutilation and early pregnancies. In addition, according to a quotation from 60, 9, "women's movement ought to forge and maintain strong partnerships" with religious and cultural leaders, who "have only been marginally engaged in the discussion in the past" even though "their role as the bedrock of societal norms and beliefs can no longer be denied". Later in a quotation from the same article it is perceived that "these leaders are the only true influencers of male attitudes and beliefs" and women's movement having good relationship with the leaders helps attain "true and consistent change in the hearts and minds of generations to come" (60, 9).

It may also be important to offer "capacity-building to equip these [rural] women to be able to speak out for the rights of women in their communities" (63, 8), because at the moment "many women working in the rural areas, such as midwives and teachers, do not seem to comprehend that they are actually advancing women's rights" (63, 8).

Also, there is an expression that claims that "actually African Woman has always been empowered" (63, 3). However, African people are thought to have adapted too much Western patriarchal and oppressive views, and now gender activists are "trying to bring things back to the egalitarian model" (63, 3), that was wiped away when African people adapted too much Western patriarchal views.

5.3.7 The importance of collective action

All over the world women recognise the value of collective action as a starting point to effectively activate positive outcomes for gender equality. 60, 8

It is mentioned that collective action and joint decision-making is important when pursuing for gender equality. This includes not only women working together in order to enhance their position in the society, but also using teamwork that includes both men and women in decision-making. A quotation from 60, 11 states: “- - improving gender equality in the world today means improving joint decision-making. The only way to ensure this is for management to guarantee that all hands are on deck when it comes to planning and implementation of the societal mandates. This way, every individual feels like a useful part of a growing system, and teams are able to respect one another, regardless of sex, because of the apparent contribution of each team player to the overall success of any given community”. A quotation from 60, 8 continues: “- - Ugandan politics ought to strive to be governed primarily by an innate culture of mutual respect for each participant in decision-making processes. Without a concerted effort to value the opinions and needs of both men and women, the desired end of a democratic society shall remain a distant dream for our nation, causing society to diminish into silence and intolerance”. It is also claimed that “female politicians, however, should be cautious not to always depend on this type of male support, and instead use the temporary support as a springboard to enhance the power of collective action” (60, 8). A quotation from 60, 11 agrees that “- - the marketplace is increasingly becoming conscious about teamwork and virtually all organisations and entities agree that leadership teams should be made up of both men and women”.

There are also claims about individual not able to do much to interfere, for example, cases of violence: “I do not have the authority to do something significant about it [gender-based violence]” (63, 7, 3). A quotation from 63, 7, 5 agrees with this view: “As a neighbour, I can hardly intervene but report to the police or the local council who have the authority to handle such matters”. This also indicates that acting together would be a more effective way to enhance gender equality than working alone.

5.3.8 Gender equality begins at home and in childhood

Gender equality starts from home and a man can model his daughter into the superwoman he wants her to be, but this can be achieved only if we believe in gender equality. 60, 7, 9

In several parts of the data there are expressions about gender equality starting at home. For example, a quotation from 60, 10 states: “- gender equality is best appreciated and inculcated within a home setting; that smallest unit of society where we all grow up in the absolute love of our parents and siblings. It is at home where as little children we are taught how to live first with each other, and later with the wider community”. There is a perception about parents and culture having a great role in raising their children so that they respect gender equality: “how we culture children from an early stage defines to a large extent what they become later in life” (63, 5). Also, parents can model their children: “a man can model his daughter into the superwoman he wants her to be” (60, 7, 9) and women’s movement as mothers should ensure “that boy children grow up respecting girl children, as opposed to subscribing to stuff like ‘prove that you are a man’” (63, 5) and “boys should be sensitised early in life on the importance of gender equality” so that ignorance will not be an obstacle to reach gender equality in the future (60, 7, 11). Perceptions of men and women boys can be seen in these statements. Girl child should be raised up to be a superwoman, which may be considered as teaching a girl to be independent and thus changing the views about ‘weak’ and dependent women in the future. On the other hand, boy children should grow up respecting girls, which indicates the desire to change how men see women; not as inferior anymore. In addition, it seems to be a critical factor that especially boys and men understand the importance of gender equality: “I also think boys should be sensitised early in life on the importance of gender equality, otherwise ignorance will be a big obstacle to achieving gender equality” (60, 7, 11). Home setting, culture and parents, hence, have an important role in making children aware of the importance of gender equality. It is also mentioned that it is necessary that people believe in gender equality in order to enhance it.

5.3.9 Education as a powerful too to promote gender equality

Putting women and girls’ issues at the center of national education policies will not just give them better prospects, it will lay a realistic foundation for building a more stable, prosperous, and hopeful future for Uganda and its women and girls. 56, 5

All things considered, no doubt repositioning women and girls’ issues as priority in national education policies requires strategic reforms at all levels of the education system. Like I said earlier, we all have a responsibility and role to play and the time is NOW! 56,5

There are several expressions that include perceptions of improving gender equality in school setting and through education. The examples include several ways to improve girls’ education

and conditions at school. Thus, the perception of especially girls' issues needing address in Uganda continues in this section. The quotation above (56, 5) indicates that developing girls' education will help girls and women today and in the future. There is a claim that "an educated girl is a secret weapon in the fight against global poverty" (56, 9), and that "education has a significant contribution to a Nation's Gross Domestic Product, in whichever program, whether formal or adult education" (56, 9). In a quotation from 56, 1, education is said to be "one of the most powerful instruments for changing women's position in society" and "an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process".

In order to make girls' position in education better, it is needed from government "to put in place and/or strengthen implementation of policies that create an environment where girls have access to schools and can learn effectively" (56, 5). Hence, "adequate funding and well-trained teachers are needed as well as a school environment that promotes girls' learning and a social environment that values educated girls and women" (56, 5). As it is seen in the findings about the perceptions of gender equality, there still seems to be lots of undervaluation of educated girls and women. Schools should also be made "safe for girls and agree appropriate sanctions to tackle harassment of girls in schools by teachers, fellow pupils and others" (56, 5). It is also mentioned in 56, 5 that "government should strengthen mechanisms to monitor gender equality in the education system", for example, take appropriate measures to prevent the spread of HIV; and prioritize women's adult literacy programmes". Since the private sector is increasingly important in education, "government should take deliberate steps to ensure that they are part of government policy to improve girls' access and retention" (56, 5). In addition, it is claimed that "it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that core elements of the education sector policies and plans include initiatives on women's and girls' education, such as stipends and scholarships, provision of sanitary facilities, and uniform grants" (56, 5), and "all school curricula should be made gender-sensitive" (56, 5). Scholarships would "support women and girls who have the passion but no financial ability to acquire adult education" (56, 9), and "national celebrations for adult education could be initiated to motivate citizens to enroll for the program" (56, 9).

The actions mentioned above seem to be necessary to enhance girls' conditions in school. In 56, 6, it is also mentioned that teachers and students should be trained to be gender-sensitive, and establishing "Girls Clubs" and "Empowerment Camps" could help "raise the self-esteem of female students and decrease harassment" and girls could "learn about their rights and other

life skills such as self-esteem and leadership”. Teachers should be trained about how to make a “more comfortable environment for female students” (56, 6). This could enhance “raising [girls’] self-esteem and renewing the girls’ commitment to their education“ (56, 6). Besides, “prosecuting the perpetrators should continue being a central focus for the government and other law and order enforcers like the police” (56, 6). Thus, The ones who perform abuse towards students at school should be punished by police and government. In addition, “teachers must also learn what acceptable behavior in a school environment is and what is not acceptable such as sexually harassing girls” (56, 6), which indicates that all of the teachers does not appear to know what is appropriate behaviour in school. School should be safe for girls and there should not be a fear of being abused, and teachers should be trained about how to handle the cases of student being abused. The state seems to have an important role in developing women’s and girls’ education. Sometimes it may be needed to draw “in other agencies to maximize the provision of schooling” (56, 5). The government also needs to speak out “gender inequalities that worsen the situation of low levels of education among women and girls especially in the rural setting” (56, 9).

Besides government, NGOs or other organisations may be an effective actor in supporting women’s rights and gender equality. Organisations can, for example, raise “raising public awareness for girls’ education through development education” (56, 5), and this kind of expertise need to be utilized “in efforts to make key stakeholders aware of the difficulties faced by women and girls when it comes to accessing education or campaigning for gender responsive education policies” (56, 5). In 56, 9 it is stated that NGOs and other organisations “need to support government in developing poverty-reduction strategies geared towards enabling women and girls who have missed out on formal education to have a chance of accessing adult education”. It should also be examined the “systems that keep women and girls’ at the periphery of education policy processes” (56, 5) and from entering school remaining in school, and learning effectively (56, 5). Local feedback can help identifying these structures. In addition, it is important to make “strategic reforms at all levels of the education system” in order to reposition “women and girls’ issues as a priority in national education policies” (56, 5). I believe that with increased education about these and other gender-related issues, we shall be able to make more headway in addressing an issue that has existed across generations. Each one of us has a responsibility to advocate for gender equality because someone affected out there could be your sister, daughter, mother or even brother, uncle or son – and soon it could be even you! 60,4

In addition, more education is needed. Increased education about gender-related issues could help ensure that issue of gender inequality will be addressed: “I believe that with increased education about these and other gender-related issues, we shall be able to make more headway in addressing an issue that has existed across generations. Each one of us has a responsibility to advocate for gender equality because someone affected out there could be your sister, daughter, mother or even brother, uncle or son – and soon it could be even you!” (60, 4). Also, access to adult education should be provided especially for women and girls who do not have financial ability to acquire adult education (56, 9). Finally, affirmative action has been thought to have contradictory outcomes, as it was found earlier in the results, and it is perceived as ineffective or even discriminating practice by some. However, it is also stated that affirmative action can be useful tool to enhance gender equality in school setting, but in that case, there should be diverse approaches combined: “A combination of affirmative action strategies has provided for somewhat more openings. However, for affirmative action to have an effect on gender equity and access to education; there is need for government and other stakeholders to adopt multifaceted approaches in which various strategies or packages support one another in order to close the gender gap in education” (56, 7).

5.3.10 Enhancing gender equality at workplaces

It is indefensible for an expectant mother to go on maternity leave with conflicted feelings due to the fear that she will be disadvantaged in one way or another in comparison with her male counterparts. Instead, organisations should establish mechanisms to ensure that women’s specific concerns do not work to their disadvantage, especially unavoidable situations like childbirth and childcare. In fact, women should even be allowed one week in a month to take it easy during the time they experience their monthly periods. This is something only experienced by women, and male employers and colleagues may sometimes not understand or even appreciate women’s mood changes during this period. The policy does not need to be explicit, but women deserve such privileges. 60, 4

Women’s specific traits due to biology should be noticed in workplace so that they do not disadvantage women at work compared to men who do not have, for example, maternity leave or menstruation. It is stated that women “should not be mistreated at work because of what they go through naturally”, the same quotation continuing by claiming that “they should feel safe and respected in regard to this, but that still seems far-fetched in Uganda” (55, 8), indicating that respecting women’s issues in workplaces needs developing. It is even suggested that

women need some privileges due to their menstruation since it causes pain. Male colleagues and employers may not fully understand women and their natural issues. In the quotation from 60, 4 above, it is even expressed that women deserve certain privileges at workplaces due to their biological issues.

Nevertheless, it is also suggested that leaders should identify individual strengths of each employee rather than focusing too much on their sex: “- - rather than worrying about the skills they don’t have, leaders should focus their energy on identifying individual strengths of all employees regardless of their sex, and arranging capacity building opportunities for each of them to enhance their performance at work” (60, 11). In 60, 11 it is claimed that, in addition to women’s support groups, there should be groups consisting of men and women at workplaces – it would lead to “a mutual nurturing environment where both men and women learn to lean on each other to effectively get the job done at all times” instead of women being “looked at as inferior to men “.

It is also claimed that “unless the men and women at the top of our society strategically decide that equality at the top is the right goal to achieve, it simply won’t be happening any time soon” (60, 11). It is important for the leaders to include both men and women in the teams and leadership positions: “For real change to occur, and in order to achieve a stronger balance, today’s leaders must have a strategy to achieve equality for men and women. This calls for a willingness to ensure that there are ample numbers of female and male candidates for all available leadership positions, with relevant mentoring programmes to build their capacity. In order to do this, we must hold leaders accountable for specific actions that signify diversity and strength at the workplace” (60, 11). It is also suggested that the “- - empowerment of young female and male leaders is crucial for the achievement of gender equality and social justice” (60, 6). Empowered with information about gender issues, the leaders can advance gender equality at workplaces in the future. If the young people are entering public institutions with knowledge about gender issues, they can better address the social injustices and gender inequalities. It is also stated that “in addition to strengthening the capacities of women and youth for decision-making and advancing issues of gender equality in the political arena, there’s also need to nurture feminist visions and values among young people who will come into public institutions with ‘a critical eye’, especially with regard to pressing societal issues such as social injustices and gender inequalities” (60, 6).

5.3.11 The importance of good quality health services

Several expressions indicated that improving the health services and women's access to them is a necessary party of enhancing gender equality and women's position in Uganda. As it is claimed in 60, 2, "investment has to be made in women's health". Especially the need of better access to family planning is emphasized: "The Ugandan government ought to advocate for and include family planning in its health programs and acknowledge that a high level of unmet need for family planning may negatively affect women's health and their overall well-being" (55, 4). In 55, 4 it is also claimed that "a large population and family planning - - are directly connected to a country's progress and women empowerment" since women who cannot control their reproductive lives in terms of "unspaced and involuntary pregnancies are at risk of health complications, maternal deaths, a large dependence burden, and limited opportunities to participate in economic activities". High population in rural areas may lead to "land wrangles which sometimes result to deaths, owing to the fact that the land available cannot accommodate the rising population" (55, 4). However, better access to family planning is perceived to give women "a higher say in family preparations, a low economic burden hence improved nutrition, health, access to education and better living standards" (55, 4) as well as "easy access to employment in formal and informal sectors, reduced involuntary pregnancies, abortions, maternal deaths, expenditure on social services and a reduced dependence burden on the government hence contributing to the national development" (55, 4). According to these quotations, access to family planning appears to be an important issue in Uganda, contributing to the overall development of the nation. It is stated that if the health sector is developed further, it will improve women's empowerment, and thus, gender equality: "while it's not possible to achieve efficiency in the [health] sector overnight, experts say if corruption is fought, supervision facilitated, drugs availed to the poor, and health workers facilitated, the [health] sector will immensely improve women's empowerment" (55, 3). However, it takes time and resources to effectively improve the health sector.

5.3.12 More legislation is needed

Gender bias against women arising from cultural and religious attitudes needs to be tackled by gender-parity promoting policies and legislation. - - Land and asset ownership and security should be guaranteed by legislation. Policy and legislation should be made to ensure that women benefit from their labour, particularly in agriculture. 60, 2

Lastly, the absence of enough gender sensitive policies regarding sexual and reproductive health rights for women have in a way established the fate of women both domestically and in the social domain. It is sad that without detailed policy and law to rein in the patriarchal nature of our Ugandan society, women will always have the lower hand in decision making. They will thus continue to be the social scape goats for perversion and all manner of deceit. It is indeed sad that the nurturers of Uganda's posterity are the victims of the most underhand plot to silence women for good. 55, 9

It is suggested that legislation should be increased regarding many areas in order to reach gender equality. Without legislation, women do not get enough justice, and “without detailed policy and law to rein in the patriarchal nature of our Ugandan society, women will always have the lower hand in decision making” (55, 9). Since there are many cultural and religious attitudes against women, they should be addressed by legislation and policies that promote gender-parity. In addition, women's right to ownership and women benefiting from their labour should be ensured by legislation. Also, the practice of widow inheritance is perceived problematic and the disadvantages that widow-inheritance causes for women could be addressed by legislation. When woman's husband dies, woman may be left with no ownership to lands or not gaining any income – “However, if well protected by the law, such women would have the freedom to more ably make decisions over their lives without forced interferences from their in-laws” (55, 1). Legislation that addresses women's right to ownership or gaining income would be effective to reduce the problems caused by widow inheritance. Thus, legislation would help them make independent decisions regarding their lives. In addition, women who are being abused “are unable to see their day of justice in the light” (55, 9) without legal assistance. It is claimed that “matching bold policies for girls with the sufficient financial investment needed to translate them into equitable outcomes for girls cannot be overemphasized” (56, 5). This quotation indicates that it is not enough to implement the policies but also resources are needed to put them into practice.

There appears to be a perception that gender equality cannot be reached without policies and legislation – it seems inevitable to make these in order to people understand the importance of women having the same rights and better position. However, there is also a finding that indicates that a gap seems to exist between what is provided by legislation and what actually happens in real life. The gap is discussed in more detail above in chapter 5.2.5.

5.3.13 Challenges that hinder enhancing gender equality

Four main obstacles hinder rapid progress towards achieving gender parity in Uganda. First, poor or non-existent maternal health services continue to cause high maternal morbidity and mortality. Second, there is poor quality education, with a high dropout rate of especially girls in primary schools. Three, there are cultural impediments to land, asset and property ownership and security for women. And four, there are cultural attitudes and practices which have led to rampant gender-based violence. 60, 2

I have heard about the women's movement although I do not know the specific groups involved. They say women have to have rights and should not be treated with disrespect or subjected to violence, but I have seen women who have this idea of equality or women's emancipation simply become a problem. I will give you an example; sometimes when a woman has a better job and earns more than her husband, she wants to be the "man" in the home. Equality should have a limit because a man has to remain the leader in the home. 63, 7, 5

There are also expressions that indicated that there are several challenges connected to gender equality, and that they hinder enhancing gender equality. In 63, 1 it is stated that the challenges that women's movement and enhancing gender equality face include "the socially constructed roles of women, patriarchy" as well as "the ways in which the movement came to be viewed by the general public" (63, 1). The ways to enhance women's rights need proper considering. For example, people may become defensive if too radical strategies are used. Men may get the idea that women's movement is aiming at taking away men's privileges or "push them against the wall" (63, 1). In 63, 6 this perception can be seen too: "Feeling insecure at the women's empowerment, men have amplified their high handedness leading to rise in cases of violence against women and or in some cases abdicating their fatherly responsibilities. As a result, divorce, child neglect and single motherhood are becoming widespread".

Using wrong, for example too radical, strategies may cause challenges for the movement: "- radical strategies no longer work. 'We found that when we make noise, people become defensive, even when they do not understand the issues we are raising.'" (60, 3). In the past, women's movement was seen to "brought antagonism in families, between husbands and wives" (63, 3). After all, there still is somewhat negative response from men with women who are empowered and financially sufficient because it makes men insecure. However, "including the man in the movement to make them realise that the movement is not against the men has helped save the image of the movement" (63, 3). After all, there still is somewhat negative response from men

with women who are empowered and financially sufficient because it makes men insecure: “there is a negative response from men with women who are empowered and financially sufficient - This too makes men insecure - The women activists need to redefine the movement, because the struggle has changed face.” (63, 3), indicating that leaving men out of the movement brings undesired challenges for women’s movement. Women’s movement has to redefine the movement, because there are different challenges today connected to women empowerment, for example men feeling attacked or outsider.

This is connected to the finding that indicates that women’s movement should not blame men for women’s problems because it may only make them defensive. Also, especially rural women may view women’s movement as only “a ploy by some elite women to stack the odds in their favour, with many failing to see its relevance to their day-to-day lives” (63, 1), which implies that not every woman experiences the women advocacy at the same way. However, there is also a statement that eventually people have understood that the movement meant well since “the activities of the women’s movement spoke otherwise” (63, 1). This kind of views, however, may affect how effectively gender equality is reached. Other challenges connected to achieving gender equality are poor health services, poor quality education and cultural impediments to women’s ownership and security.

I hear about the groups that fight for women rights but I believe equality for women has brought problems. A woman cannot respect you once you give her rights, when she is more educated or has more money than you do. As such, I do not want her to be more financially empowered than me because she will disrespect me. 63, 7, 8

The negative views about promoting gender equality among the citizens may hinder the progress towards gender equality. For example, it may be viewed that a woman will disrespect the man if she is more financially empowered than the man. Besides, even though it was mentioned that family planning is one of the ways to improve women’s status hence gender equality, there may be negative cultural beliefs about contraception or abortion: “Despite its associated benefits, communities especially in rural areas regard family planning with contempt and for that matter it is not easily accepted. Family planning is seen to undermine culture and tradition especially the belief that large families are a sign of wealth and status - To some people using contraceptives for determining the number of children would lead to curses and abuse to status of the household. Some women believe that family planning methods such as pills and injections cause cancer, infertility, excessive bleeding, loss of interest in sex and obesity among

others” (55, 4). It is claimed that some “women say that initiating a discussion about contraception is generally considered unacceptable, and often the partner rejects such discussions” (55, 5) however also “some male youths also say that women also oppose contraceptive use and react negatively when men raise contraceptive issues, contending that women fear the risk of not having children following use of contraceptives” (55, 5). This indicates that there are deep cultural beliefs, lack of knowledge and misconceptions regarding contraceptive use and family planning. Lack of knowledge or support is emerging from many parts of the data, for example “although some women are interested in family planning, they lack knowledge, access to family planning and some do not receive support from their spouses” (55, 4). It is also stated that women’s “insistence on getting your rights is repugnant to us. It offends us. It has an unpleasant odour to it. Rights are unisexual. There are no men’s rights and women’s rights. - -“ (60, 5).

Gender stereotypes may also cause challenges for the promotion of gender equality: “Other times women are given a platform to serve in positions of influence but misuse such positions, which leads some people to make general conclusions about women and what they can or cannot do. This can be overcome by sensitisation of the masses about gender equality” (60, 7, 8). Also, in the culture in which it is believed “that women are incapable of making proper decisions without questioning men’s behaviour - - in such an environment, which is highly patriarchal, many people have internalised male dominance and have not advanced the gender equality agenda, and hence influencing public policy, especially from a gender perspective, has become a daunting task for women who wish to see change” (60, 6). If people are used to male-dominance and patriarchy, advancing gender equality may be challenging. The patriarchal culture may also lead to a situation in which “society will look at men who promote gender equality as effeminate” (60, 7, 13) – thus, promoting gender equality “won’t be easy for them; they will meet resistance. But that shouldn’t be a deterrent” (60, 7, 13). However, misconceptions can be overcome by informing the masses about gender equality.

There are also other challenges, such as failing to view women too heterogeneously. Some people may think that women’s movement is only for the elite women: “I have heard about women who fight for the rights of other women to be equal to men, but I think those things apply to women who went to university. There are women who have a lot of money and I doubt if they are successful in their marriages” (63, 7, 7). However, there is diversity among women, for example “people think an economically empowered woman automatically has rights, so no one approaches business women“ (63, 8). In addition, different religions may cause challenges since the messages of the women’s movement should be made so that they address all of the

groups and different women: “several Muslim women may not associate with the movement because it tends to clash with the values of the Islamic faith which does not allow a woman to speak in public circles, and particularly, in the presence of a man except through her husband - - women’s movement doesn’t seem to only antagonize the Muslim faith but also the Christian faith. - - their faith has no authority to change certain concepts that Jesus left. Since Jesus for example chose men (not women) as his disciples, - - what power the church would have to repeal the precedence. For the afore mentioned reasons, religion often excuses itself from committing to women’s rights ideologies” (63, 6). Thus, it is necessary for the women’s movement to consider the heterogeneity of women when addressing their issues. There are also said to be “complaints that competition among some gender and women’s rights organisations may retard the progress or efforts towards comprehensively delivering for women and girls” (60, 3).

6 CONCLUSIONS

The research questions of my thesis are as following; 1. How is gender perceived in ACFODE's Arise-magazine, 2. How is gender equality perceived in ACFODE's Arise-magazine, and 3. How is improving gender equality perceived in ACFODE's Arise-magazine. In this chapter, I will present a summary of the results of my thesis and connect them with the theoretical framework and context of my thesis.

Starting with the first research question, the findings of my research revealed a strong division of gender into two categories: men and women. As time and place affects how gender is defined (Devor, 1989; Järviluoma et al., 2003), and the concept of gender may vary depending on the culture (Persadie, 2012), it is important to look further into how gender is perceived in Arise-magazine before analysing the perceptions of gender equality. The expressions mainly mentioned *both sexes* or *two sexes* as well as *both women and men*, although there was one sentence with the expression of *all genders*. For example, Järviluoma et al. (2003) state that the existence of transgenders is widely acknowledged in many cultures, there are no direct mentions or other genders than men and women, or male and female, in the data. I assumed that words such as mother, father, husband, wife, daughter and son are referring to either men or women. In addition, although there are both words sex and gender used, there is not a clear, visible definition of whether sex is referring to a biological sex and gender to a culturally and socially constructed issue, as they have usually been seen (Andersen, 1988; Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Devor, 1989; Gailey, 1987; Rossi, 2010), or whether both concepts are considered as culturally constructed, as for example Butler (2007) or Järviluoma et al. (2003) have suggested. However, there are both biological and cultural differences of men and women expressed in the data, and it is also pondered whether the characters of men and women are explained by cultural practices or partly as a result of biology. This battle between the impacts of genealogy or biology and socialization and culture has often been discussed in prior literature (Devor, 1989; Martin, 2010).

There is a powerful confrontation between the category of men and the category of women in places in the data. Men and women are described as *counterparts*, and often compared to each other. Even though there are expressions that question the traditional view of men and women (for example having separate roles), there can be seen expressions that compare women to men

and see them as opposite in the data. This is connected to Rossi's (2010) view that seeing someone as the "opposite" sex and using confrontation help understanding genders, sexes and sexualities. However, this view may be limiting in terms of seeing one who does not fit into these categories as abnormal.

Men and women are compared in terms of biological differences as well as social roles and positions in the data. There is a perception of men and women being fundamentally different, and this perception seems to appear both in ACFODE and in the culture in general, as it appears in the data. The differences can cause confusion about whether men and women can work together or not, and there are thought to be separate roles for men and women as they are perceived to have different skills and gifts in the society. There have been seen to be differences in the roles, interests and needs of men and women as well as how they behave or how it is expected for them to behave. For example, there may be differences concerning the sexual behaviour of men and women; it is socially more acceptable and natural for men to have many partners, whereas women naturally want to commit to one partner, and it is also socially more unacceptable for women to have many partners. These differences may cause conflicts at home, and for example woman may suffer from the risk of HIV and AIDS because of men's many partners that is considered as acceptable and normal in the culture.

The view of ACFODE seems to be that the separate nature of men and women should be not denied but recognized in order to, for example, the specific needs of women to be heard in the implementation of policies and services. However, ACFODE seems to be interested in changing the view of seeing women as weak and dependent, and instead emphasize the women who have been successful and the fact that also women can be capable to change the position of themselves and the society. Giving women access to education can be a critical way to enhance the wellbeing of the whole household, since women's income is more often spent on child's goods than that of men.

The findings reveal that powerful separate roles have been associated with men and women throughout the Ugandan culture, especially in the rural areas. These can be seen as part of a gender belief system of Ugandan society, that includes views, beliefs and stereotypes about the genders as well as the appropriate behaviour and roles of the genders (see Deaux & Kite, 1987). Men have a traditional role of building a house and financially contribute into household as well as working outside home. It seems to be perceived that men have more decision-making power within the household as well as at workplaces and in politics. On the contrary, women

are not expected to take financial responsibility or contributing into incomes of the household – in places, they are not even though to be capable to do that. Women do not have as much access to ownership. It is strongly expressed in the data that women are considered as the “weaker sex” in the society, and do not have the same possibilities as men do. Women are mostly perceived to have the role of caregivers and mothers. Besides, women may not be considered suitable for certain types of jobs (e.g. Tushabe, 2009), and also Arise includes expressions that state that there are male areas of work. However, there are also views that differ from the traditional view of roles; especially women’s activists seem to aim at changing this view about women being just caregivers. For example, some expressions include the views that see women as managers and key decision-makers at home. These are in line with the view of Youngs (2004), who suggests that masculine identity is often connected to economic and political power as well as influence and decision-making, whereas feminine identity is often attached to private sphere including mainly taking care of home and family.

While women are seen as dependent on men due to mostly cultural impact, men are sometimes seen even as oppressors or evils who dominate the patriarchal culture in which women are forced to survive under. There is a perception of especially men holding negative stereotypes or expectations about women. The weaker position may be due to the perception of men having controlled women or treating them as inferior especially in the past. If women differ from this role, they may fear what the other members of the society would say if, for example, her husband did all the housework. However, also the expressions of the data partly support the view of women as nurturers since it is stated that men should not be afraid of women’s feminine, nurturing mother power. This view reflects the prior research about gender equality in Uganda; men seem to be more powerful than women, and women’s place has been seen to be at home whereas men more usually work outside home and thus gain income and participate in decision-making (e.g. Hague et al., 2011; Porter, 2015).

One factor that is seen to create the separate roles for men and women is culture. There are expressions that suggest that Ugandan culture is a patriarchal one, where women’s capabilities are less believed in than men’s capabilities. There is a perception that even though women would like to take higher positions at workplaces, such as leadership position, there can be beliefs about women meant to stay at the production level which may be an obstacle for women’s progress in her career. Women are generally not believed to be capable of managing financial issues, and these are often thought as men’s field. There is also a perception of women being brought up to believe that they are dependent on men, and this dependence seems to

concern many areas, such as building home and gaining income at work. Women's role has been seen at home as caregivers widely in the society. As Martin (2010) claims, gender stereotypes may lead to gender discrimination and low expectations of the stereotyped groups, and negative stereotypes may affect what people expect for themselves and how they live up to those expectations. This kind of expectations about women and men may limit the possible career choices of individuals. In addition, social norms can affect how able women are able to control their reproductive lives in terms of contradiction and abortions. Even though the negative impacts of expectations are especially connected to women in the data, also men's possibilities can be considered as limited in some ways if there are many strict traditional roles in the society. There are also expectations and beliefs towards men, such as many children is what makes man a real man. The expectations attached to men's appropriate roles and behaviour may also be problematic.

It is also perceived that men and women may have expectations towards each other, for example, within a family, and these expectations may sometimes be biased. Sometimes the different positions of men and women can be due to misconceptions and lack of knowledge. For example, men may deny women the use of contraception because they do not know how the methods work. This observation provides an alternative view to the view that men are simply evil. Besides, women may not have enough knowledge in order to successfully use contraception or control their reproductive life otherwise. In addition, religious beliefs can have a role when discussing about the position of men and women. For example, the perceptions of women being dependent on men may arise from religion where women have been seen as 'helpers' of the men. In addition, the biology of women may be perceived as determining that woman cannot perform some tasks or jobs successfully. If it is something that God wants, or due to biology, why should, or how it even could, be changed?

Martin (2010) states that some people still view gender as a natural phenomenon although it is widely also agreed as a social constructed issue, and Archer and Lloyd (2002) state that it is agreed that the distinctions between gender arise more from cultural than biological sources. However, explaining gender (Rossi, 2010) or sex differences (Andersen, 1988) only by physiological or biological factors has been considered inadequate and too restricting. If one differs from the expectations set by the culture and society or is physiologically different, one easily becomes a victim of ridicule, isolation and social exclusion (Martin, 2010). However, also seeing that social factors impact on the gender differences is problematic since then it would also

be possible to change anything socially, even though the cultural patterns are usually quite resistant and difficult to change (Tannen, 1994). Thus, both socialization and biological factors have to be noticed when thinking about how gender as well as gender roles and expectations are constructed. However, there seems to be variation between the perceptions of the general public and ACFODE - obviously, the gender advocates would like to change the perception of seeing women as biologically or religiously determined to be the helper of the man, not independent. However, there is also a perception that sees patriarchal culture arising from West, and that African culture was actually matriarchal before adapting the viewpoints of the Western culture.

One's sex is often the base for gendered expectations in the society (Andersen, 1988) and gender often defines the roles, responsibilities and rights of men and women (Grown et al., 2005), and it seems to be perceived so in the data, too. However, the biological sex does not always correspond with the gender identity (Andersen, 1988) and gender role is not the same as gender identity (Järviluoma et al., 2003), which, according to the data, do not seem to be very noticed facts in Ugandan society, since people are often thought to behave as it is expected from their gender. The social norms of the society determine the appropriate roles and behaviours of women and men, and also the possibly differential power between the sexes (Grown et al., 2005), and it seems that men have more power in Uganda than women. In addition, Järviluoma et al. (2003) state that there are gendered actions, and certain qualities are more valued and appreciated due to nature of their gendering.

Even though men are partly seen as oppressors and women are even thought to be victims of male chauvinism even in rural areas, it is mentioned that there are many men fighting for women's rights and respecting women in the modern Uganda, on the contrary to the very traditional view. Besides, it is acknowledged that there are men who do not put men ahead of girls. Although there are strong separate roles, expectations and behaviours attached to women and men throughout the data, there also are expressions that state that sex should not matter too much. For instance, success at work should be measured by the performance of employee, not sex. It is reminded that focusing too much on the differences of men and women may distract people from the more important thing – seeing and treating people as individuals with individual skills. This is connected to the gender beliefs – if someone is only seen through his or her gender, it may provide very limited opportunities for one's life (e.g. Järviluoma et al., 2003). There also are expression that claim that men and women can work well together and have an

agreement on things – also examples about both wife and husband contributing into building a house. In addition, it is claimed that after all, both men and women need each other.

The second research question concerns the perceptions of gender equality. As Holli (2012) states, also equality is a constantly changing concept that is affected by culture and location. Thus, time and place also impact on what is demanded from equality (Holli, 2012). The main finding of the analysis is that gender-based inequality exists in Uganda according to the data. The inequalities are faced especially by women in their daily life. There seem to be perceptions that gender equality cannot be achieved since women and men are not created equal among some of the Ugandans. This derives from the perception of women and men as fundamentally different due to biological factors that cannot be changed, and also from the religious beliefs about the differences between men and women – “even God did not create us equal” (63, 7, 4) and “A man is supposed to be superior to a woman - - I can never accept to live with a woman who thinks she is equal to me” (63, 7, 7).

However, even though women and men are thought to be biologically different, the biological issues of women are not perceived to be taken into account enough for example in workplaces. Thus, it seems that it is easy for deny certain jobs from women due to biological issues, but when it comes to, for example, maternity leave, some workplaces do not change their practices but demand women to work like male employees. Male employers may not understand women’s needs. It is also partly thought that if woman feels equal to a man, she will not listen to the man anymore, and therefore achieving gender equality is not supported by some Ugandans. However, it seems to be increasingly acknowledged by Ugandans that the achievement of gender equality is aimed at in Uganda, and that many individuals, groups and organisations fight for correcting the inequalities. However, although this is recognized, some Ugandans still do not ‘support’ gender equality. If this kind of beliefs and perceptions are present throughout the society, they can strongly hinder the advancement of gender equality, and it might be difficult or at least time-consuming to change the view of the majority.

Another important finding arising from the data is that gender inequalities are perceived to concern especially women. There may be unequal amount of men and women in different areas of the society, such as in workplaces or in political field. Women are perceived as ‘endangered’ sex in the data, yet society does not do enough to address the problems faced by women. There are many societal and cultural barriers that are perceived to create and maintain the gender inequalities. As men are considered more powerful than women already when discussing about

gender roles and descriptions, they are also seen to occupy more important roles in government and have more access to formal education than women. Thus, women face inequalities as the society does not have a positive view of females who advance into higher educational levels. There are inequalities between girls and boys at school; the dropout rate for girls is higher than boys in education. The dropouts may be due to lack of responding to girls' biological needs, such as sanitary materials or private sanitation facilities during their menstruation periods. In addition, early marriages and pregnancies may cause girls' dropouts from school. Besides, even if a girl manages to finish her school path, there may be challenges awaiting her in the working life.

When talking about the inequalities that are especially faced by women, the perception of men as dominant is seen again. For example, there is a perception of already little boys raised up to see little girls as sex object. Especially media and its image of women has a great role in this. Besides, there are perceived to be many negative attitudes towards women and girls in Ugandan society. In addition, many problematic practices towards women take place in Uganda. Employees may receive more salary if they go to work on a field. However, it is quite impossible for women to leave their homes due to the social expectations and their role as mothers and caregivers. Women may also not be considered as capable as male colleagues. In addition, if a woman gets a higher position than male colleagues at work, she will not be believed to have gained it due to her performance but due to non-job-related reasons. There are many expectations that seem to limit women's working life. Therefore, women's needs and issues are not seemed to be taken seriously at some workplaces. It may also be that the texts in the data address inequalities faced especially women since it is a women's rights magazine. Nevertheless, the theoretical and contextual framework of the thesis support the perception of gender inequalities concerning especially women.

Problematic practices that especially concern women are seen in other areas of culture and society. These practices include, for example, domestic violence, early marriage and pregnancies, female genital mutilation, abuse or harassment at school and widow inheritance. Although some of these practices are illegal, they still happen since not all perpetrators receive sanctions. Besides, these practices can take different forms – for example, girls were circumcised in the past, whereas today it is illegal but the girls who have not been circumcised are often considered prostitutes and raped. Thus, the reduction of female genital mutilation may be but a small consolation for the girls who end up being raped. Therefore, it is perceived that the cultural attitudes

towards need changing. When it comes to widow inheritance, it is considered problematic practice that derives from woman not having power in the household. When the husband of a woman dies, sometimes she can do nothing but adjust to the situation of being inherited by, for example, her brother-in-law since usually women do not have independent income or land ownership. Or, in the cases where the widow is not inherited but rejected by the husband's family, the woman may end up living in the streets with her children. In addition, these practices seem to cause much problems and suffering, since apart from home, these practices may also take place in institutions where women seek for help.

The practices are perceived to happen due to poverty but also due to ignorance about the negative impacts of the practices. There is a connection between prior literature and the data, since also, Sen (1987; 1992; 1999) has suggested that especially women may face challenges in terms of disbelief of their capabilities, disparities in the freedoms of men and women and cultural neglect of the needs of women. Martin (2010) agrees that women have been seen as not suitable for certain jobs. The data did not bring out many concerns regarding the morbidity and mortality of women but mainly arose other problems that women face in their daily life. Sen (1992) has also suggested that there is less gender bias against women regarding mortality, morbidity and nutrition but more gender differences in terms of capabilities, such as the ability to read and write, the ability to avoid bodily mutilation and being free to work in leadership positions or aim at independent careers. The ideal situation of gender equality is perceived to be one in which women and men are equal and enjoy equal opportunities. This is also important for sustainable development; in order for it to happen, women and men must have equal opportunities to reach their potential. However, it is emphasized in the data that enhancing women's rights does not take away the rights of men and advancing gender issues is about making a society where everyone can prosper.

One important finding is that it is acknowledged that there have been many efforts and also progress in the pursuit of gender equality. Uganda has, for example, implemented legislation and policies that are aimed at narrowing gender gap. Women's participation in several different positions, also leadership positions, in work and politics has increased. It seems to be that their role is not seen as a manager of household chores so strongly anymore. However, an interesting fact was that there are expressions that state that husbands allow women to work nowadays. This indicates that women still have a somewhat dependent role on men. Nevertheless, several expressions implied that many Ugandans at least think that women should not be seen as inferior anymore. It may be a good start for a wider and more persistent change. Besides still women

still seeming to have a dependent role, there are perceptions about women who have independently, or by collectively acting with other women, advanced their rights and positions. This, in turn, indicates that women are not thought to rely on only men anymore. Progress has been made also in the field of gender advocacy, since more rural women are interested in advocating gender issues. Rural women are also said to be reporting more cases of domestic violence as well as engaging more in economic activities.

However, although there has been much progress regarding the state of gender equality in Uganda, and the progress is acknowledged and appreciated in the data, there is a perception that still much needs to be done. This is in line with the prior literature, which recognized the progress made concerning women's situation during the past 50 years (Martin, 2010), but underlines that there still are inequalities that especially women face (Baker et al., 2009; Martin, 2010; Sen, 1992). In addition, Kakuru (2008) has stated, in the context of Uganda, that despite many efforts and progress, there still are some problems concerning, for example girls' dropout rates. Even though there are efforts to change the situation of Ugandan women and progress has been made in achieving this goal, there still is a gender gap in health, economic, social and political aspects, that is considered unacceptable and needs addressing.

The process of achieving gender equality in terms of not seeing boys and men ahead of girls and women is perceived to be in the beginning. There still are substantial barriers to the full equality and freedom of women of Africa. In addition, even though the number of women in the political field has increased, their contribution is not considered meaningful enough. Besides, women in parliament may not advance the situation of the women of Uganda but the agenda of their political party. In this view there is an assumption about the needs and interests of all Ugandan women being the same – although woman is a member of a party, it seems to be perceived that she should advance the situation of all Ugandan women once she gets into the Parliament. In this kind of view, the sex matters more than the political party. Women also often do not get to debate with their male counterparts in the political field but instead end up competing amongst themselves for space to raise gender issues. By this view, it can be assumed that there is confrontation and separation between men and women also in the political field of Uganda. In addition, despite progress it is claimed that there still remain negative and pervasive attitudes toward women.

It is perceived in many parts of the data that although there are efforts made in terms of implementing legislation that addresses the gender issues, there still is a gap between what is provided

in legislation and in real life. This gap questions the power of legislation and indicates that culture has more powerful impact on the gender-based expectations and practices than implementation of legislation. In addition, even though legislation is implemented discrimination may also take different forms. There are also been efforts in terms of affirmative action policies, which has allowed more women to participate in education or work. However, even though affirmative action has seen to help women participate, affirmative action has also been seen as causing discrimination since it may put the ones who gain from it in an inferior position and make them seem incapable of participating with the help of their own skills. In fact, it is claimed in the data that affirmative action has stigmatized people and put girls and women in a bad spot in the society. Besides, affirmative action can be seen as a discriminatory practice against men and boys, which is not the aim of advancing gender issues. The practices aiming at enhancing gender equality should notice the changing nature of culture, since discrimination and patriarchy can take different forms.

The challenges that women face are thought to have consequences to the whole society. Therefore, it is also emphasized that men and the whole society should realise the importance of advancing women's rights and thus gender equality. When evaluating equality, there have been used the concepts of *formal* and *relative* equality in the literature (Holli, 2012; Persadie, 2012; Pojman, 1995). In the case of Uganda and gender equality, it may be suitable to speak about formal equality but relative equality seems not to be fully taken place in Uganda. It seems that men and women are provided the same opportunities on paper, but according to the data, the lived experiences still differ largely depending on one's gender, and all requisitions that are set by legislation are not met in real life. As Baker et al. (2009) state, there are many perspectives from which to evaluate inequality; inequality of economic resources, inequality of respect and recognition, inequality of power, inequality of learning and working and inequality of love, care and solidarity, and according to the data it seems that women are unequal in every areas of these. Women are claimed to have less income, respect, power, education and work and also love, care and solidarity since they are being abused also in institutions that are supposed to provide help for women. In addition, even though there is progress in some areas of equality, it does not directly mean that there is equality in other area, too, as Sen (1992) also suggests. There is a perception that the state of gender equality needs improving in Uganda, and also several ponderings about how to improve it in the data. As there is the finding that gender inequalities concern also women, it is logical that also ways to improve women's rights in Uganda are considered ways to enhance gender equality in general.

The main finding concerning the third research question is that women empowerment is needed in order to advance gender equality. Girls and women should be empowered so that they are able to make educated decisions concerning their health. When empowered with information, women can better control, for example, their reproductive lives. As the previous findings showed, there are problems deriving from women's lack of knowledge concerning their reproductive lives and their reproductive lives may not be in their own hands. For example, women may not know about their right to control their births in terms of contraception or abortions or may not use these services due to social norms and fear. When empowered with information, women can be more of control of their own lives. In addition, social barriers to use the health services should be removed. Women should be empowered concerning learning leadership skills, knowledge and education, economic independence and decision-making. When women have access to decision-making, it can be guaranteed that women's voice is heard and women's issues addressed when, for example, developing services. Besides, Sen (1999), has suggested that women's active agency and hearing their own voice is important in advancing the position of women, since when economically empowered, women can contribute to the overall household. Empowering women also helps seeing women as active agents, not as passive recipients who only receive help concerning their wellbeing (Sen, 1999).

One finding concerning gender equality is that it is not perceived as only women's issue even though women's rights are emphasized in the data. It is acknowledged that, for instance, women's movement should not target only women but their messages should include men, too. In addition, there are perceptions that some men consider women's movement aggressive or offensive since some of the activists may use aggressive language and accusing men for being oppressors. Men have also been left out of the women's movement. This kind of behaviour may end up in men becoming defensive, so it has been noticed that it is actually very important to include men in women's movement and in advancing women's rights. Although men have seen as oppressors, they should not be excluded from the process of achieving gender equality or be a target or enemy of the women's movement. If men and women have equal opportunities and if they can co-operate, gender equality is easier attained, since the understanding towards each other grows. It is also suggested that, in order not to scare men, it could be talked about 'equal opportunities' for men and women rather than 'women's rights'. Advancing women's rights does not mean taking away men's rights and enhancing women's rights cannot end up in discriminating men since it is only inequality to other direction. Thus, there is a perception that both gender should be respected and included when pursuing for gender equality.

There is a surprisingly big role attached to men in advancing women's rights in the data even though male engagement in promoting the situation of women is mentioned in the prior literature (Grown et al., 2005). Males are seen as dominant in the society and having much decision-making power, so it is seen to be necessary to include men in advancing women's rights, since they are powerful and actually can make a change in the society. Besides, many problematic practices are perceived to be performed by men, so they could learn to respect women in the process of enhancing women's rights and understand the importance of women in the society. Thus, involving men in advancing women's rights and thus gender equality is considered necessary in the data.

It comes out in the data that women's movement and collective action are important factors in the pursuit of gender equality. The importance of women's movement is acknowledged, although it is also expressed that the ways in which the movement works need an update. For example, the diversity among women should be more taken into attention in the movement and how they address people. According to the data, women may differ from each other in terms of different religion or the place where they live. For example, the experience of rural women can differ from the experiences of urban women. In addition, Järviluoma et al. (2003) suggest that there are many social factors, such as class and ethnicity, that impact on how gender is constructed, and Baker et al. (2009) state that as there is diversity among women, there can be inequalities among women, too. Women's movement could also co-operate more with religious and cultural leaders, since they are often the source of persistent cultural and religious beliefs that can powerfully impact on the lives of citizens. Collective action in terms of including both women and men and groups of many people in decision-making helps advance gender equality. If both women and men are included, they can learn to respect each other regardless of the sex. In addition, it is perceived that an individual alone does not have much power to change things, but collective action is powerful.

Enhancing and respecting gender equality can start at home and continue in school and workplace. Gender equality can also be advanced in the political field. Home is seen to have an important role in culturing children into gender roles, and also Persadie (2012) has suggested that gender is a result of a cultural socialization process. It is claimed that girl child should be raised as independent and learning skills, whereas boy child should be raised up to respecting girls. This view may derive from the observation of women considered usually weak and men not respecting them, and already by raising up children this traditional view could be challenged. Education is perceived to be one of the most powerful tools to change women's position

in the society, and this can be reached by implementing policies that guarantee girls' access to education and safe schools for girls without a fear of being abused during a school day. NGOs can advance girls' education, for example, by informing the masses about the importance of girls' education. The factors that cause girls' dropout from schools should be identified and addressed. Increasing education about gender-related issues could help people realise the need to address the problems. Women's biological issues should be taken into account in workplaces but also measuring the employees by their performance, not sex. Men and women should be included in the same teams in workplaces so that they can lean on each other and work effectively – this would change the view of women being inferior to men. The leaders of the future should be trained about gender issues so that they can address them in the future.

Women's issues should be addressed more also in the health services, and especially family planning is considered to give women better control of their own rights, as it is also mentioned above. Developed health sector is seen to eventually improve women's situation in Uganda. It is also suggested that more legislation is needed especially regarding the negative cultural attitudes of people. This is also surprising since the gap between prior legislation and real life is also acknowledged. This arouses a question; is legislation an effective tool to address these inequalities? Tannen's (1994) view of cultural patterns being difficult to change applies here. However, more legislation could guarantee women's access to land ownership and income gaining. Martin (2010) also suggests that many inequalities are due to lack of understanding and implementing the law. Nevertheless, it is also suggested that without enough legislation, women of Uganda will always have a lower position in decision-making than men. Besides, legislation may make people see the importance of respecting women and their rights or the negative impacts of certain cultural practices, although for example female genital mutilation may still happen despite the legislation, or discrimination can take different forms as mentioned above.

Advancing gender equality is also perceived to contain many challenges regarding women's culturally constructed roles but also the ways in which the people see the movement. Men can consider women's movement threatening if men are accused or pushed against the wall. It has been learned that radical strategies are not effective in women's movement and may only make people defensive. Thus, men should not be excluded but included, as suggested also above. Besides, nowadays people perceive women's movement differently due to the activities that involve also men. However, there might be competition among different gender and women's

rights organizations. In addition, patriarchy and negative views about women or gender equality, or disbelief of citizens that there could be gender equality at all, may hinder the progress towards full gender equality in Uganda.

7 DISCUSSION

The main focus of this thesis is on gaining information concerning the perceptions about gender and gender equality in the context of Ugandan gender-advocacy NGO, ACFODE. As the theoretical framework of the thesis shows, gender is widely considered as socially constructed issue (Andersen, 1988; Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Devor, 1989; Gailey, 1987; Järviluoma et al., 2003; Persadie, 2012; Rossi, 2010), and also equality takes different forms depending on the place and time (Holli, 2012), and various views have been presented about the concept of equality (Douglas & Devins, 1998; Sen, 1992; Westen, 1990), it is interesting to see how gender and gender equality are perceived particularly in this context. The main findings include a perception of two gender categories, men and women, in the data, and that especially women suffer from gender inequalities in Uganda. Increasing women's access to decision-making and involving men in the improvement of women's rights are seen as vital tools for enhancing gender equality in Uganda.

Baker et al. (2009) claim that inequality is an issue that affects the whole world. As this thesis concerns gender equality, it is remarkable to notice that several injustices and inequalities are stated to be faced by especially women in different parts of the world, and inequality can take many forms (Sen, 2001b). As ACFODE is an NGO that has worked in the field of gender issues over three decades, it offered interesting knowledge and information concerning the state of gender equality in Uganda. The findings propose that many gender inequalities are perceived to exist in Uganda, and that the inequalities concern especially women. The findings also reveal that there is a perception of mainly two genders in the data – men and women, no other genders are mentioned. When analysing the gender and gender roles presented in the data, the most dominant view seems to be that men are dominant and more powerful in the Ugandan society, whereas women are considered to depend on men and even to be weak. Women are often seen most suitable for staying at home taking care of the children and household chores, even though ACFODE appears to be eager to change this view. Sometimes the differences between the genders are thought to be biological, physiological or determined by God. Therefore, it may be thought that it is impossible to change the gender-specific traits because they are biological or otherwise inevitable facts, as Holli (2012) states. Women and men appear to be viewed through confrontation both in the society and in Arise's texts. However, there is a clear perception of

the need to change this layout and offer women independency and possibilities to work outside home, not being dependent on men's income.

The way in which men and women and the roles and expectations of them are perceived in Ugandan culture, can be considered a base for gender inequalities in the Ugandan society. There are many unequal practices and challenges in the political field, workplaces, education, institutions and at home setting concerning especially women. These include sexual harassment, widow inheritance, lack of safety and respect, female genital mutilation as well as early marriages and pregnancies. These practices are considered to take place especially in the rural areas, as it also appears in the prior literature (e.g. Alava et al., 2020; Sen, 1999) due to the prevailing poverty. In addition to the poverty, the ignorance of the negative impacts of the practices is another major cause for fostering these practices. Besides the above-mentioned practices, women may face challenges in the political field and at work in terms of disbelief towards their capabilities or commitment to their work. These concerns regarding their capabilities and commitments can be connected to the perception of women as caregivers as mothers, who should prioritize home and family.

The ideal situation of gender equality is perceived to be having equality and equal opportunities between men and women. Several ways to achieve this situation are presented in the data. Especially women's own agency and involving men in the advancement of women's rights are considered to be powerful tools in achieving gender equality. Girls' and women's access to education is another important factor when aiming at gender equality, since educated women can better contribute to their families and households and thus, the overall society and country. Indeed, women's contribution to the development of the whole society and country has been perceived to be necessary in achieving sustainable development.

Men are needed in the pursuit of women's rights since they are seen to have more power over the resources and in decision-making, as well as ability to influence people. This is a slightly paradoxical view since also women's own activity and independency are emphasized. Men are perceived to be needed 'at the forefront' of advancing women's position, and women need men in order to be empowered. This partly maintain the view of women as incapable of independency, however this may be due to the fact that men are perceived to have more power and if the powers of men and women are combined in a successful co-operation, it would provide desirable outcomes. However, it is also mentioned in the data that women should not lean on men too much but use their help as a 'springboard' for more independent future. This calls out for

the need to co-operation between men and women and indicates that confrontation between men and women is not successful way to enhance their relationships and position of women. It may be that over time the views would be changed, and women could get along much more independently.

Also, since men are often perceived as oppressors, men may begin respecting women more if they are involved in advancing their position, since they may understand more about the problems that women face. However, there may be women's activists using even aggressive messages that only threaten men or make them defensive. In addition, as gender equality is perceived to be strongly connected to advancing women's position, men may not perceive gender equality or the importance to enhance it in the same way as women. The problematic practices may arise from traditional cultural views or lack of knowledge hence accusing only men for the women's position is not very fruitful. Besides, some men seem to think that once women are empowered, they do not listen to their men anymore. In addition, rural women may have thought women's movement only as something for elite, urban women.

Thus, it should be reconsidered how to address people. Indeed, is also pondered whether to use the concept of 'women's rights' or 'equal opportunities for women and men', so that it could be understood by the people that women's movement is not to just enhance women's rights and decrease men's rights, but to advance the overall society and gender equality. All in all, people seem to be increasingly understanding the real aim of women's movement and the importance of enhancing women's rights and gender equality. There are a few major challenges for enhancing gender equality that include deeply rooted cultural and religious beliefs as well as a gap between what is provided by legislation and what happens in real life. In places, it appears that despite legislation, problematic practices take place due to strong cultural beliefs. However, within women's movement, there are activities at grassroots level that may also have impact on legislation.

However, there are not many mentions about the challenges that men face, although, Holli (2012) and Grown et al. (2005) note that there are inequalities and social norms that can negatively affect the lives of men and boys, too. The impact of gender inequality on men is mostly seen through what the problems that women face cause for men, and that men should understand that women having unequal position to men affects also the lives of men and boys, and overall development of the society. This is in line with Sen (2001b), who reminds that the uneven treatment of women negatively affects the lives of men and boys, too. This implies that the

inequalities are actually perceived concern mostly women in Uganda, which is in line with Sen (1992), Baker et al. (2009) and Martin (2010), who claim that there still are multiple and complex inequalities in the world concerning especially women. The progress that has been made regarding gender issues throughout the world are, however, acknowledged both in the prior literature and in the data.

The magazine offers an interesting form of data, since the findings might be different when directly asking ‘what is gender’ or ‘what is equality’ from the citizens or women’s rights activists in an interview. Also, analysing the data with different method, such as discourse analysis, would provide findings from different viewpoint, as the language use in the magazine may rebuild the views of gender and gender equality through, for example, the way that the readers are addressed. Therefore, it would be interesting to make a detailed discourse analysis out of the data. Also, there might be different results if analysing material published by another Ugandan gender-advocacy organization. These are fascinating research ideas for the future.

As Sen (1987) suggests, also the deprived groups may be habituated to inequality, or be unaware of the possibility of a social change. One problem connected to the unequal cultural practices that women face is that they are seen as a natural, persistent part of the culture and not considered unjust (Sen, 2001a). Also, women may want to maintain harmony at home and in the society (Porter, 2015) and thus does not demand rights for herself. These indicate the power of cultural beliefs.

Analysing the data without theory-based preconceptions turned out to be very rewarding as it enabled to find expressions that might have been unnoticed with strict theoretical preconceptions or pre-determined categories. It seems that gender equality is perceived as a versatile issue with many inter-linked problems, and different types of inequality can nourish each other as Sen (2001b) suggests. In many cases, the inequality that women face could be avoided by, for example, offering them good quality health services and respect at the grassroots level. For example, the poor services, such as education and health services, offered to women may cause uncertainty and inability to control their own reproductive lives, which also contribute to the inability of women to progress in their career. This, on the other hand, may lead to women’s less income in the household and, thus, weaker position-making power in the family compared to man, who gains income.

Women’s challenges not only affect the lives of women but also the whole family (e.g. Sen, 1987), and the whole family and society may be affected by women’s lack of services in terms

of poverty, large population and lack of educated citizens. On the other hand, if women were respected more, their issues could be more heard and addressed in the society. One problem can easily lead to another, and in turn, development in one area may cause development in another area. As Sen (2001b) states, gender inequality has many faces, as it also appears to be in ACFODE's texts. Achieving full gender equality seems to be a challenging task in Uganda, but one that is not impossible: "Gender equality and equity are not simply an end to aspire to, but a hope to cling onto for the preservation of society" (60, 9).

8 RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH

In this chapter I will consider a few main issues connected to the reliability and ethics of the research. First, in qualitative content analysis researcher's interpretations have a central role. As there were not strict pre-determined categories in the analysis, it is possible that another researcher could have interpreted the text differently. However, I have tried to make my analysis process visible by presenting examples of the analysis process as well as quotations from the data. In addition, different findings could have found if, for example, theory-based approach of qualitative content analysis was used. Besides, there is a possibility that I have interpreted the texts in a different way than the one who has written the texts, since I am examining Ugandan NGO from Finland. However, being not familiar with the Ugandan culture may provide different, maybe objective insights to the issue. In addition, it is important for the researcher to deeply interpret the data and not make quick conclusions or think that the data speaks for itself (Salo, 2015), and thus I have analysed the results beyond categorization in the chapter 5. Finally, the results of the research cannot be considered as 'truth', since, as Järviluoma (2003) claims, the results are interpretations of the researcher. Besides, the results show perceptions of socially constructed issues that vary depending on the time and place.

I have tried to increase the reliability of my research by not setting too strict research questions that would include pre-conceptions or already define the phenomenon that is studied – I reflected my preconceptions based on my previous knowledge and wanted to allow the perceptions flow from the data. For example, I did not make preconceptions about the perceptions of gender by asking about 'perceptions of men and women' or 'perceptions of the roles of men and women in Uganda' but examined how gender is perceived in the data. In addition, I included the research question about the perceptions of improving gender equality after I found out that the need to improve women's rights and gender equality in Uganda is expressed in the data. I did not want to have too strict theoretical base for the analysis, since when using theory as a base for the analysis, something in the data can be left unnoticed. However, it would be impossible to totally eliminate the prior knowledge or preconceptions of the researcher, and, on the other hand, it may not be even necessary to fully eliminate them in order to be able to analyse the results. Nevertheless, the impact of the prior knowledge should be reflected, and I have tried to reflect my own preconceptions during the analysis and research process. Due to the social constructionist nature of the issues of gender and gender equality, the concepts of

validity and reliability may not be suitable for this thesis, since there is not a certain social reality but different constructions.

In addition, when interpreting the results, it is important to notice that the magazine from which the data is collected from is published by an organization which focuses on women's rights. That, among the possible donors, may have an influence on what kind of content is included in the magazine. Besides, the specific themes of the issues that were included in the analysis may have impact on the results. However, the need to emphasize certain themes by dedicating a whole issue for a specific theme already tells what is considered important in ACFODE. Publications published by different organization could include different views and topics, even about the same phenomenon. Also, these views may vary depending on culture or country.

In addition, the people who are interviewed in Arise are interviewed by ACFODE, which must be remembered when interpreting their perceptions about gender equality in Uganda. The data is relatively big, which caused challenges at some point, but eventually offered wide picture of the perceptions concerning gender and gender equality of ACFODE and the Ugandan culture in general. The data collected from the magazine that is published by ACFODE can be considered containing up-to-date knowledge about gender issues in Uganda as ACFODE is a relatively big and old NGO, and therefore the results can be considered quite reliable, providing knowledge of gender and gender equality in the way that Ugandan gender-advocacy NGO perceives them.

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Appendix 1 The codes of the data

Arise, Issue 55, October 2013: Endangered Gender Women and Health

55, 1 Editorial

55, 2 Alcohol, the real lady killer

55, 3 The role of Uganda's health sector in promoting women's empowerment

55, 4 Demystifying family planning

55, 5 Contraception and sexuality among the youth

55, 6 Technology bringing justice closer to women

55, 7 Who will care for the mothers on the street?

55, 8 The crisis of women's sexual & reproductive health rights in Uganda

55, 9 HIV/AIDS and the vicious cycle of violence against women

55, 10 Widow inheritance: the invisible crime

55, 11 Young women charting for a path of reproductive health

Arise, Issue 56, July 2014: Empowering Women through Education

56, 1 Editorial

56, 2 The education sector in Uganda: a general overview

56, 3 Social barriers to access education: the intersection between girls education & the traditional African culture

56, 4 Private education: how has it created more opportunities for women and girls in the education sector?

56, 5 Repositioning women and girls' issues in national education policies

56, 6 Sexual abuse in institutions of learning & how it affects women & girls

56, 7 Reality check: is affirmative action still relevant?

56, 8 Why a feminist should homeschool her child(ren)?

56, 9 Adult education and its impact on women and the girl child

Arise, Issue 60, June 2016: Politics of Gender Equality: The Role of Men and Boys in Promoting Women and Girls Rights

60, 1 Editorial

60, 2 Situation of women and girls' rights in Uganda

60, 3 Is the gender movement still alive?

60, 4 Gender at the workplace: equality in roles or equality in rights?

60, 5 Opinion: op-ed and commentary – sorry women, your rights are unpleasant to us

60, 6 Youth rising to take their place as vectors of gender equality

60, 7 Street talk

60, 7, 1 Street Talk 1

60, 7, 2 Street Talk 2

60, 7, 3 Street Talk 3

60, 7, 4 Street Talk 4

60, 7, 5 Street Talk 5

60, 7, 6 Street Talk 6

60, 7, 7 Street Talk 7

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60, 7, 12 Street Talk 12

60, 7, 13 Street Talk 13

60, 8 The role of male leaders in sustaining discussions on women & girls' rights

60, 9 Fanning the wrong flame: the mistakes society continues to make whilst harbouring gender inequalities

60, 10 Gender equality – a family experience

60, 11 The true nature of leadership: respecting each one's strength to achieve a common goal

60, 12 Why Rwanda, not Uganda, is officially the best place to be a woman

60, 13 Gender-responsive service delivery – what is the status quo in Uganda?

Arise, Issue 63, December 2017: Inclusion & Exclusion: Women's Movement Building

63, 1 Editorial

63, 2 The sassiness of the women's movement

63, 3 Feature article: The Uganda women's movement: context, contests and prospects

63, 4 Communicating for women's movement building in Uganda: where is the problem?

63, 5 Plugging men into women

63, 6 Issues the Mar the growth of a diverse women's movement in Uganda

63, 7 Street talk: What do you know about the women's movement in Uganda?

63, 7, 1 Street Talk 1

63, 7, 2 Street Talk 2

63, 7, 3 Street Talk 3

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63, 7, 6 Street Talk 6

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63, 7, 8 Street Talk 8

63, 8 How to strengthen and sustain women's organising power